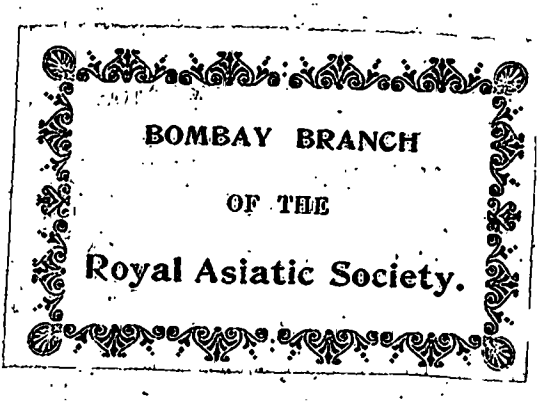
00076462



Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 26 March, 2016

RAVENSNEST;

OR,

THE REDSKINS.

76462
ac

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"THE PILOT," "THE PATHFINDER," "DEERSLAYER,"
"TWO ADMIRALS," &c.

In every work regard the writer's end;
None e'er can compass more than they intend.
POPE.

KX-C 420

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.
1846.

00076462

RAVENSNEST;

OR,

THE REDSKINS.

CHAPTER I.

"Our life was changed. Another love
In its lone woof began to twine;
But oh! the golden thread was wove
Between my sister's heart and mine."

WILLIS.

HALF an hour later, uncle Ro and myself were seated at table, eating our dinners as quietly as if we were in an inn. The footman who had set the table was an old family servant, one who had performed the same sort of duty in that very house for a quarter of a century. Of course he was not an American, no *man* of American birth ever remaining so long a time in an inferior station, or in any station so low as that of a house-servant. If he has good

qualities enough to render it desirable to keep him, he is almost certain to go up in the world; if not, one does not care particularly about having him. But Europeans are less elastic and less ambitious, and it is no uncommon thing to find one of such an origin remaining a long time in the same service. Such had been the fact with this man, who had followed my own parents from Europe, when they returned from their marriage tour, and had been in the house on the occasion of my birth. From that time he had continued at the Nest, never marrying, nor ever manifesting the smallest wish for any change. He was an Englishman by birth; and what is very unusual in a servant of that country, when transferred to America, the "letting-up," which is certain to attend such a change from the depression of the original condition to that in which he is so suddenly placed, had not made him saucy. An American is seldom what is called impudent, under any circumstances; he is careless, nay, ignorant of forms; pays little or no purely conventional respect; does not understand half the social distinctions which exist among the higher classes of even his own countrymen, and fancies there are equalities in things about which, in truth, there is great

inequality between himself and others, merely because he has been taught that all men are equal in rights; but he is so unconscious of any pressure as seldom to feel a disposition to revenge himself by impudence.

But, while John was not impudent either, he had a footman's feeling towards those whom he fancied no better than himself. He had set the table with his customary neatness and method, and he served the soup with as much regularity as he would have done had we sat there in our proper characters, but then he withdrew. He probably remembered that the landlord, or upper servant of an English hotel, is apt to make his appearance with the soup, and to disappear as that disappears. So it was with John; after removing the soup, he put a dumb-waiter near my uncle, touched a carving-knife or two, as much as much as to say, "help yourselves," and quitted the room. As a matter of course, our dinner was not a very elaborate one, it wanting two or three hours to the regular time of dining, though my grandmother had ordered, in my hearing, one or two delicacies to be placed on the table, that had surprised Patt. Among the extraordinary things for such guests was wine. The singularity,

however, was a little explained by the quality commanded, which was Rhenish.

My uncle Ro was a little surprised at the disappearance of John; for, seated in that room, he was so accustomed to his face, that it appeared as if he were not half at home without him.

"Let the fellow go," he said, withdrawing his hand from the bell-cord, which he had already touched to order him back again; "we can talk more freely without him. Well, Hugh, here you are, under your own roof, eating a charitable dinner, and treated as hospitably as if you did not own all you can see for a circle of five miles around you. It was a lucky idea of the old lady's, by the way, to think of ordering this Rudesheimer, in our character of Dutchmen! How amazingly well she is looking, boy!"

"Indeed she is; and I am delighted to see it. I do not know why my grandmother may not live these twenty years; for even that would not make her near as old as Sus, who, I have often heard her say, was a middle-aged man when she was born."

"True; she seems like an elder sister to me, rather than as a mother, and is altogether a

most delightful old woman. But, if we had so charming an old woman to receive us, so are there also some very charming *young* women—hey, Hugh?"

"I am quite of your way of thinking, sir; and must say I have not, in many a day, seen two as charming creatures as I have met with here."

"*Two!*—umph; a body would think *one* might suffice. Pray, which may be the two, Master Padishah?"

"Patt and Mary Warren, of course. The other two are well enough, but these two are excellent."

My uncle Ro looked grum, but he said nothing for some time. Eating is always an excuse for a broken conversation, and he ate away as if resolute not to betray his disappointment. But it is a hard matter for a gentleman to do nothing but eat at table, and so he was obliged to talk.

"Everything looks well here, after all, Hugh," observed my uncle. "These anti-renters may have done an infinite deal of harm in the way of abusing principles, but they do not seem to have yet destroyed any material things."

"It is not their cue, sir. The crops are their own; and as they hope to own the farms, it would be scarcely wise to injure what, no doubt, they begin to look on as their own property, too. As for the Nest House, grounds, farm, &c., I dare say they will be very willing to leave me them for a while longer, provided they can get everything else away from me."

"For a time longer, at least; though that is the folly of those who expect to get along by concessions; as if men were ever satisfied with the yielding of a part, when they ask that which is wrong in itself, without sooner or later expecting to get the whole. As well might one expect the pickpocket who had abstracted a dollar, to put back two-and-sixpence change. But things really look well around the place."

"So much the better for us. Though, to my judgment and taste, Miss Mary Warren looks better than anything else I have yet seen in America."

Another "umph" expressed my uncle's dissatisfaction—displeasure would be too strong a word—and he continued eating.

"You have really some good Rhenish in your cellar, Hugh," resumed uncle Ro, after tossing off one of the knowing green glasses full—

though I never could understand why any man should wish to drink his wine out of green, when he might do it out of crystal. "It must have been a purchase of mine, made when we were last in Germany, and for the use of my mother."

"As you please, sir; it neither adds nor subtracts from the beauty of Martha and her friend."

"Since you are disposed to make these boyish allusions, be frank with me, and say, at once, how you like my wards."

"Meaning, of course, sir, my own sister exclusively. I will be as sincere as possible, and say that, as to Miss Marston, I have no opinion at all; and as to Miss Coldbrook, she is what, in Europe, would be called a 'fine' woman."

"You can say nothing as to her mind, Hugh, for you have had no opportunity of forming an opinion."

"Not much of a one, I will own. Nevertheless, I should have liked her better, had she spared the allusion to the 'proper person,' who is one day to forge a chain for my sister, to begin with."

"Poh, poh; that is the mere squeamishness of a boy. I do not think her in the least pert or forward, and your construction would be *tant soit peu* vulgar."

"Put your own construction on it, *mon oncle; I* do not like it."

"I do not wonder young men remain unmarried; they are getting to be so ultra in their tastes and notions."

A stranger might have retorted on an old bachelor for such a speech, by some allusion to his own example; but I well knew that my uncle Ro had once been engaged, and that he lost the object of his passion by death, and too much respected his constancy and true sentiments ever to joke on such subjects. I believe he felt the delicacy of my forbearance rather more than common, for he immediately manifested a disposition to relent, and to prove it by changing the subject."

"We can never stay here to-night," he said. "It would be at once to proclaim our names—our name, I might say—a name that was once so honoured and beloved in this town, and which is now so hated!"

"No, no; not as bad as that. We have done nothing to merit hatred."

"*Raison de plus* for hating us so much the more heartily. When men are wronged, who have done nothing to deserve it, the evil-doer seeks to justify his wickedness to himself by

striving all he can to calumniate the injured party; and the more difficulty he finds in doing that to his mind, the more profound is his hatred. Rely on it, we are most sincerely disliked here, on the spot where we were once both much beloved. Such is human nature."

At that moment John returned to the room, to see how we were getting on, and to count his forks and spoons, for I saw the fellow actually doing it. My uncle, somewhat indiscreetly, I fancied, but by merely following the chain of thought then uppermost in his mind, detained him in conversation.

"Dis broperty," he said, inquiringly, "is de broperty of one Yeneral Littlepage, I hears say?"

"Not of the General, who was Madam Littlepage's husband, and who has long been dead, but of his grandson, Mr. Hugh."

"Und vhere might he be, dis Mr. Hugh?—might he be at hand, or might he not?"

"No; he's in Europe; that is to say, in Hengland." John thought England covered most of Europe, though he had long gotten over his wish to return. "Mr. Hugh and Mr. Roger be both habsent from the country, just now."

"Dat ist unfortunate, for dey dells me dere might be moch troobles here abouts, and Injin-acting."

"There is, indeed; and a wicked thing it is, that there should be any thing of the sort."

"Und vhat might be der reason of so moch troobles?—and vhere ist der blame?"

"Well, that is pretty plain, I fancy," returned John, who, in consequence of being a favoured servant at head-quarters, fancied himself a sort of cabinet minister, and had much pleasure in letting his knowledge be seen. "The tenants on this estate wants to be landlords; and as they can't be so, so long as Mr. Hugh lives, and won't let 'em, why they just tries all sorts of schemes and plans to frighten people out of their property. I never go down to the village but I has a talk with some of them, and that in a way that might do them some good, if any thing can."

"Und vhat dost you say?—und vid whom dost you talk, as might do dem moch goot?"

"Why, you see, I talks more with one 'Squire Newcome, as they calls him, though he's no more of a real 'squire than you be—only a sort of an attorney, like, such as they has in

this country. You come from the old countries, I believe?"

"Ja, ja—dat ist, yes—we comes from Charmany; so you can say vhat you bleases."

"They has queer 'squires in this part of the world, if truth must be said. But that's neither here nor there, though I give this Mr. Seneca Newcome as good as he sends. What is it you wants, I says to him?—you can't all be landlords—somebody must be tenants; and if you didn't want to be tenants, how come you to be so? Land is plenty in this country, and cheap too; and why didn't you buy your land at first, instead of coming to rent of Mr. Hugh; and now when you *have* rented, to be quarrelling about the very thing you did of your own accord?"

"Dere you didst dell 'em a goot t'ing; und vhat might der 'Squire say to dat?"

"Oh! he was quite dumb-founded, at first; then he said that in old times, when people first rented these lands, they didn't *know* as much as they do now, or they never would have done it."

"Und you could answer dat; or vast it your durn to be dum-founded?"

"I pitched it into him, as they says; I did. Says I, how's this, says I—you are for ever

boasting how much you Americans know—and how the people knows everything that ought to be done, about politics and religion—and you proclaim far and near that your yeomen are the salt of the earth—and yet you don't know how to bargain for your leases! A pretty sort of wisdom is this, says I! I had him there; for the people round about here is only too sharp at a trade."

"Did he own dat you vast right, and dat he vast wrong, dis Herr 'Squire Newcome?"

"Not he; he will never own anything that makes against his own doctrine, unless he does it ignorantly. But I haven't told you half of it. I told him, says I, how is it you talk of one of the Littlepage family cheating you, when, as you knows yourselves, you had rather have the word of one of that family than have each other's bonds, says I. You know, sir, it must be a poor landlord that a tenant can't and won't take his word: and this they all know to be true; for a gentleman as has a fine estate is raised above temptation, like, and has a pride in him to do what is honourable and fair; and, in my opinion, it is good to have a few such people in a country, if it be only to keep the wicked one from getting it altogether in his own keeping."

"Und did you say dat moch to der 'Squire?"

"No; that I just says to you two, seeing that we are here, talking together in a friendly way; but a man needn't be ashamed to say it anywhere, for it's a religious truth. But I says to him, Newcome, says I, you, who has been living so long on the property of the Littlepages, ought to be ashamed to wish to strip them of it; but you're not satisfied with keeping gentlemen down quite as much out of sight as you can, by holding all the offices yourselves, and taking all the money of the public you can lay your hands on for your own use, but you wants to trample them under your feet, I says, and so take your revenge for being what you be, says I."

"Vell, my friend," said my uncle, "you vast a bolt man to dell all dis to der beoples of dis coontry, vhere, I have heard, a man may say just vhat he hast a mind to say, so dat he dost not sbeak too moch trut!"

"That's it—that's it; you have been a quick scholar, I find. I told this Mr. Newcome, says I, you're bold enough in railing at kings and nobles, for you very well know, says I, that they are three thousand miles away from you, and can do you no harm; but you would no more dare get up before your masters, the people,

here, and say what you really think about 'em, and what I have heard you say of them in private, than you would dare put your head before a cannon, as the gunner touched it off. Oh! I gave him a lesson, you may be sure!"

Although there was a good deal of the English footman in John's logic and feeling, there was also a good deal of truth in what he said. The part where he accused Newcome of holding one set of opinions in private, concerning *his* masters, and another in public, is true to the life. There is not, at this moment, within the wide reach of the American borders, one demagogue to be found who might not, with justice, be accused of precisely the same deception. There is not one demagogue in the whole country, who, if he lived in a monarchy, would not be the humblest advocate of men in power, ready to kneel at the feet of those who stood in the sovereign's presence. There is not, at this instant, a man in power among us, a senator or a legislator, who is now the seeming advocate of what he wishes to call the rights of the tenants, and who is for overlooking principles and destroying law and right, in order to pacify the anti-renters by extraordinary concessions, that would not be among the foremost, under a

monarchial system, to recommend and support the freest application of the sword and the bayonet to suppress what would then be viewed, ay, and be termed, "the rapacious longings of the disaffected to enjoy the property of others without paying for it." All this is certain; for it depends on a law of morals that is infallible. Any one who wishes to obtain a clear index to the true characters of the public men he is required to support, or oppose, has now the opportunity; for each stands before a mirror that reflects him in his just proportions, and in which the dullest eye has only to cast a glance, in order to view him from head to foot.

The entrance of my grandmother put a stop to John's discourse. He was sent out of the room on a message, and then I learned the object of this visit. My sister had been let into the secret of our true characters, and was dying to embrace me. My dear grandmother, rightly enough, had decided it would be to the last degree unkind to keep her in ignorance of our presence; and, the fact known, nature had longings which must be appeased. I had myself been tempted twenty times, that morning, to snatch Patt to my heart and kiss her, as I used

to do just after my beard began to grow, and she was so much of a child as to complain. The principal thing to be arranged, then, was to obtain an interview for me without awakening suspicion in the observers. My grandmother's plan was arranged, however, and she now communicated it to us.

There was a neat little dressing-room annexed to Martha's bed-room; in that the meeting was to take place.

"She and Mary Warren are now there, waiting for your appearance, Hugh ——"

"Mary Warren!—Does she, then, know who I am?"

"Not in the least; she has no other idea than that you are a young German, of good connexions and well educated, who has been driven from his own country by political troubles, and who is reduced to turn his musical taste and acquisitions to account, in the way you seem to do, until he can find some better employment. All this she had told us before we met you, and you are not to be vain, Hugh, if I add, that your supposed misfortunes, and great skill with the flute, and good behaviour, have made a friend of one of the best and most true-hearted girls I ever had the good fortune

to know. I say good *behaviour*, for little, just now, can be ascribed to good *looks*."

"I hope I am not in the least revolting in appearance, in this disguise. For my sister's sake ——."

The hearty laugh of my dear old grandmother brought me up, and I said no more; colouring, I believe, a little, at my own folly. Even uncle Ro joined in the mirth, though I could see he wished Mary Warren even safely translated along with her father, and that the latter was Archbishop of Canterbury. I must acknowledge that I felt a good deal ashamed of the weakness I had betrayed.

"You are very well, Hugh, darling," continued my grandmother; "though I must think you would be more interesting in your own hair, which is curling, than in that lank wig. Still, one can see enough of your face to recognise it, if one has the clue; and I told Martha, at the first, that I was struck with a certain expression of the eyes and smile that reminded me of her brother. But, there they are, Mary and Martha, in the drawing-room, waiting for your appearance. The first is so fond of music, and, indeed, is so practised in it, as to have been delighted with your flute; and she has talked so

much of your skill as to justify us in seeming to wish for a further exhibition of your art. Henrietta and Anne, having less taste that way, have gone together, to collect bouquets, in the green-house, and there is now an excellent opportunity to gratify your sister. I am to draw Mary out of the room, after a little while, when you and Martha may say a word to each other in your proper characters. As for you, Roger, you are to open your box again, and I will answer for it *that* will serve to amuse your other wards, should they return too soon from their visit to the gardener."

Everything being thus explained, and our dinner ended, all parties proceeded to the execution of the plan, each in his or her designated mode. When my grandmother and I reached the dressing-room, however, Martha was not there, though Mary Warren was, her bright but serene eyes full of happiness and expectation. Martha had retired to the inner room for a moment, whither my grandmother, suspecting the truth, followed her. As I afterwards ascertained, my sister, fearful of not being able to suppress her tears on my entrance, had withdrawn, in order to struggle for self-command without betraying our secret. I was

told to commence an air, without waiting for the absent young lady, as the strain could easily be heard through the open door.

I might have played ten minutes before my sister and grandmother came out again. Both had been in tears, though the intense manner in which Mary Warren was occupied with the harmony of my flute, probably prevented her from observing it. To me, however, it was plain enough; and glad was I to find that my sister had succeeded in commanding her feelings. In a minute or two my grandmother profited by a pause to rise and carry away with her Mary Warren, though the last left the room with a reluctance that was very manifest. The pretence was a promise to meet the divine in the library, on some business connected with the Sunday-schools.

"You can keep the young man for another air, Martha," observed my grandmother, "and I will send Jane to you as I pass her room."

Jane was my sister's own maid, and her room was close at hand, and I dare say dear grandmother gave her the order, in Mary Warren's presence, as soon as she quitted the room, else might Mary Warren well be sur-

prised at the singularity of the whole procedure; but Jane did not make her appearance, nevertheless. As for myself, I continued to play as long as I thought any ear was near enough to hear me; then I laid aside my flute. In the next instant Patt was in my arms, where she lay some time weeping, but looking inexpressibly happy.

"Oh! Hugh, what a disguise was this to visit your own house in!" she said, as soon as composed enough to speak.

"Would it have done to come here otherwise? You know the state of the country, and the precious fruits our boasted tree of liberty is bringing forth. The owner of the land can only visit his property at the risk of his life!"

Martha pressed me in her arms in a way to show how conscious she was of the danger I incurred in even thus visiting her; after which we seated ourselves, side by side, on a little divan, and began to speak of those things that were most natural to a brother and sister who so much loved each other, and who had not met for five years. My grandmother had managed so well as to prevent all interruption for an hour, if we saw fit to remain together,

while to others it should seem as if Pat had dismissed me in a few minutes.

"No one of the other girls suspect, in the least, who you are," said Martha, smiling, when we had got through with the questions and answers so natural to our situation. "I am surprised that Henrietta has not, for *she* prides herself on her penetration. She is as much in the dark as the others, however."

"And Miss Mary Warren—the young lady who has just left the room—has she not some *small* notion that I am not a common Dutch music-grinder?"

Patt laughed, and that so merrily as to cause the tones of her sweet voice to fill me with delight, as I remembered what she had been in childhood and girlhood five years before, and she shook her bright tresses off her cheeks ere she would answer.

"No, Hugh," she replied, "she fancies you an *uncommon* Dutch music-grinder; an *artiste* that not only grinds, but who dresses up his harmonies in such a way as to be palatable to the most refined taste. How came Mary to think you and my uncle two reduced German gentlemen?"

"And does the dear girl believe—that is

does Miss Mary Warren do us so much honour, as to imagine that?"

"Indeed she does, for she told us as much as soon as she got home; and Henrietta and Anne have made themselves very merry with their speculations on the subject of Miss Warren's great incognito. They call you Herzog von Geige."

"Thank them for that." I am afraid I answered a little too pointedly, for I saw that Patt seemed surprised. "But your American towns are just such half-way things as to spoil young women; making them neither refined and polished as they might be in real capitals, while they are not left the simplicity and nature of the country."

"Well, Master Hugh, this is being very cross about a very little, and not particularly complimentary to your own sister. And why not *your* American towns as well as *ours*?—are you no longer one of us?"

"Certainly one of *yours*, always, my dearest Patt, though not one of every chattering girl who may set up for a *belle*, with her Dukes of Fiddle! But, enough of this;—you like the Warrens?"

"Very much so; father and daughter. The

first is just what a clergyman should be; of a cultivation and intelligence to fit him to be any man's companion, and a simplicity like that of a child. You remember his predecessor—so dissatisfied, so selfish, so lazy, so censorious, so unjust to every person and thing around him, and yet so exacting; and, at the same time, so——"

"What? Thus far you have drawn his character well; I should like to hear the remainder."

"I have said more than I ought already: for one has an idea that, by bringing a clergyman into disrepute, it brings religion and the church into discredit too. A priest must be a *very* bad man to have injurious things said of him, in this country, Hugh."

"That is, perhaps, true. But you like Mr. Warren better than him who has left you?"

"A thousand times, and in all things. In addition to having a most pious and sincere pastor, *we* have an agreeable and well-bred neighbour, from whose mouth, in the five years that he has dwelt here, I have not heard a syllable at the expense of a single fellow-creature. You know how it is apt to be with the other clergy and ours, in the country—for ever at sword's

points; and if not actually quarrelling, keeping up a hollow peace."

"That is only too true—or used to be true, before I went abroad."

"And it is so now, elsewhere, I'll answer for it, though it be so no longer here. Mr. Warren and Mr. Peck seem to live on perfectly amicable terms, though as little alike at bottom as fire and water."

"By the way, how do the clergy of the different sects, up and down the country, behave on the subject of anti-rent?"

"I can answer only from what I hear, with the exception of Mr. Warren's course. *He* has preached two or three plain and severe sermons on the duty of honesty in our worldly transactions, one of which was from the tenth commandment. Of course he said nothing of the particular trouble, but everybody must have made the necessary application of the home-truths he uttered. I question if another voice has been raised, far and near, on the subject, although I have heard Mr. Warren say the movement threatens more to demoralize New York than anything that has happened in his time."

"And the man down at the village?"

"Oh, he goes, of course, with the majority. When was one of that set ever known to oppose his parish, in anything?"

"And Mary is as sound and as high-principled as her father?"

"Quite so; though there has been a good deal said about the necessity of Mr. Warren's removing, and giving up St. Andrew's, since he preached against covetousness. All the anti-renters say, I hear, that they know he meant *them*, and that they won't put up with it."

"I dare say; each one fancying he was almost called out by name: that is the way, when conscience works."

"I should be very, very sorry to part with Mary; and almost as much so to part with her father. There is one thing, however, that Mr. Warren himself thinks we had better have done, Hugh; and that is to take down the canopy from over our pew. You can have no notion of the noise that foolish canopy is making up and down the country."

"I shall *not* take it down. It is my property, and there it shall remain. As for the canopy, it was a wrong distinction to place in a church, I am willing to allow; but it never gave

offence until it has been thought that a cry against it would help to rob me of my lands at half price, or at no price at all, as it may happen."

"All that may be true; but if improper for a church, why keep it?"

"Because I do not choose to be bullied out of what is my own, even though I care nothing about it. There might have been a time when the canopy was unsuited to the house of God, and that was when those who saw it might fancy it canopied the head of a fellow-creature who had higher claims than themselves to divine favour; but, in times like these, when men estimate merit by beginning at the other end of the social scale, there is little danger of any one's falling into the mistake. The canopy shall stand, little as I care about it: now, I would actually prefer it should come down, as I can fully see the impropriety of making any distinctions in the temple; but it shall stand until concessions cease to be dangerous. It is a right of property, and as such I will maintain it. If others dislike it, let them put canopies over their pews, too. The best test in such a matter is to see who could bear it. A pretty figure Seneca Newcome would cut, for instance,

seated in a canopied pew! Even his own set would laugh at him; which, I fancy, is more than they yet do at me."

Martha was disappointed; but she changed the subject. We next talked of our own little private affairs, as they were connected with smaller matters.

"For whom is that beautiful chain intended, Hugh?" asked Patt, laughingly. "I can now believe the pedlar when he says it is reserved for your future wife. But who is that wife to be? Will her name be Henrietta or Anne?"

"Why not ask, also, if it will be Mary?—why exclude one of your companions, while you include the other two?"

Patt started—seemed surprised; her cheeks flushed, and then I saw that pleasure was the feeling predominant.

"Am I too late to secure that jewel, as a pendant to my chain?" I asked, half in jest, half seriously.

"Too soon, at least, to attract it by the richness and beauty of the bauble. A more natural and disinterested girl than Mary Warren does not exist in the country."

"Be frank with me, Martha, and say at once; has she a favoured suitor?"

"Why, this seems really serious!" exclaimed my sister, laughing. "But, to put you out of your pain, I will answer, I know of but one. One she has certainly, or female sagacity is at fault."

"But is he one that is favoured? You can never know how much depends on your answer."

"Of that you can judge for yourself. It is 'Squire Seneky Newcome, as he is called hereabouts—the brother of the charming Opportunity, who still reserves herself for you."

"And they are as rank anti-renters as any male and female in the country."

"They are rank Newcomites; and that means that each is for himself. Would you believe it, but Opportunity really gives herself airs with Mary Warren!"

"And how does Mary Warren take such an assumption?"

"As a young person should—quietly and without manifesting any feeling. But there is something quite intolerable in one like Opportunity Newcome's assuming a superiority over any true lady! Mary is as well educated and as well connected as any of us, and is quite as much accustomed to good company; while

Opportunity—" here Patt laughed, and then added, hurriedly, "but you know Opportunity as well as I do."

"Oh! yes; she is *la* vertue, or *the* virtue, and *je suis venue, pour.*"

The latter allusion Patt understood well enough, having laughed over the story a dozen times; and she laughed again when I explained the affair of "*the* solitude."

Then came a fit of sisterly feeling. Patt insisted on taking off my wig, and seeing my face in its natural dress. I consented to gratify her, when the girl really behaved like a simpleton. First she pushed about my curls until they were arranged to suit the silly creature, when she ran back several steps, clapped her hands in delight, then rushed into my arms and kissed my forehead and eyes, and called me "her brother"—her "only brother"—her "dear, *dear* Hugh," and by a number of other such epithets, until she worked herself, and me too, into such an excess of feeling that we sat down, side by side, and each had a hearty fit of crying. Perhaps some such burst as this was necessary to relieve our minds, and we submitted to it wisely.

My sister wept the longest, as a matter of course; but, as soon as she had dried her eyes,

she replaced the wig, and completely restored my disguise, trembling the whole time lest some one might enter and detect me.

"You have been very imprudent, Hugh, in coming here at all," she said, while thus busy. "You can form no notion of the miserable state of the country, or how far the anti-rent poison has extended, or the malignant nature of its feeling. The annoyances they have attempted with dear grandmother are odious; *you*, they would scarcely leave alive."

"The country and the people must have strangely altered, then, in five years. Our New York population has hitherto had very little of the assassin-like character. Tar and feathers are the blackguards', and have been the petty tyrants' weapons from time immemorial, in this country; but not the knife."

"And can anything sooner or more effectually alter a people than longings for the property of others? Is not the 'love of money the root of all evil?'—and what right have we to suppose our Ravensnest population is better than another, when that sordid feeling is thoroughly aroused? You know you have written me yourself, that all the American can or does live for is money."

"I have written you, dear, that the country, in its present condition, leaves no other incentive to exertion, and therein it is cursed. Military fame, military rank, even, are unattainable, under our system: the arts, letters and science, bring little or no reward; and there being no political rank that a man of refinement would care for, men must live for money, or live altogether for another state of being. But I have told you, at the same time, Martha, that, notwithstanding all this, I believe the American a less mercenary being, in the ordinary sense of the word, than the European; that two men might be bought, for instance, in any European country, for one here. This last I suppose to be the result of the facility of making a living, and the habits it produces."

"Never mind causes; Mr. Warren says there is a desperate intention to rob existing among these people, and that they are dangerous. As yet they do a little respect women, but how long they will do that one cannot know."

"It may all be so. It *must* be so, respecting what I have heard and read; yet this vale looks as smiling and as sweet, at this very moment, as if an evil passion never sullied it! But, depend on my prudence, which tells me that we ought

now to part. I shall see you again and again before I quit the estate, and you will, of course, join us somewhere—at the Springs, perhaps—as soon as we find it necessary or expedient to decamp."

Martha promised this, of course, and I kissed her, previously to separating. No one crossed my way as I descended to the piazza, which was easily done, since I was literally at home. I lounged about on the lawn a few minutes, and then, showing myself in front of the library windows, I was summoned to the room, as I had expected.

Uncle Ro had disposed of every article of the fine jewellery that he had brought home as presents for his wards. The pay was a matter to be arranged with Mrs. Littlepage, which meant no pay at all; and, as the donor afterwards told me, he liked this mode of distributing the various ornaments better than presenting them himself, as he was now certain each girl had consulted her own fancy.

As the hour of the regular dinner was approaching, we took our leave soon after, not without receiving kind and pressing invitations to visit the Nest again ere we left the township. Of course we promised all that was required

intending most faithfully to comply. On quitting the house we returned towards the farm, though not without pausing on the lawn to gaze around us on a scene so dear to both, from recollection, association, and interest. But I forget, this is aristocratical; the landlord has no right to sentiments of this nature, which are feelings that the sublimated liberty of the law is beginning to hold in reserve solely for the benefit of the tenant!

CHAPTER II.

> "There shall be, in England, seven half-penny loaves sold for a penny: the three-hooped pot shall have ten hoops; and I will make it felony to drink small beer: all the realm shall be in common, and in Cheapside shall my palfrey go to grass."
>
> JACK CADE.

"I DO not see, sir," I remarked, as we moved on from the last of these pauses, "why the governors and legislators, and writers on this subject of anti-rentism, talk so much of feudality, and chickens, and days' works, and durable leases, when we have none of these, while we have all the disaffection they are said to produce."

"You will understand that better as you come to know more of men. No party alludes to its weak points. It is just as you say; but the proceedings of your tenants, for instance, give the lie to the theories of the philanthropists,

and must be kept in the back-ground. It is true that the disaffection has not yet extended to one-half, or to one-fourth of the leased estates in the country, perhaps not to one-tenth, if you take the number of the landlords as the standard, instead of the extent of their possessions, but it certainly *will*, should the authorities tamper with the rebels much longer."

"If they tax the incomes of the landlords under the durable rent system, why should not the parties aggrieved have the same right to take up arms to resist such an act of oppression as our fathers had, in 1776?"

"Their cause would be better; for that was only a constructive right, and one dependent on general principles, whereas this is an attempt at a most mean evasion of a written law, the meanness of the attempt being quite as culpable as its fraud. Every human being knows that such a tax, so far as it has any object beyond that of an election-sop, is to choke off the landlords from the maintenance of their covenants, which is a thing that no State *can* do directly, without running the risk of having its law pronounced unconstitutional by the courts of the United States, if, indeed, not by its own courts."

"The Court of Errors, think you?"

"The Court of Errors is doomed, by its own abuses. Catiline never abused the patience of Rome more than that mongrel assembly has abused the patience of every sound lawyer in the State. 'Fiat justitia, ruat cœlum,' is interpreted, now, into 'Let justice be done, and the court fall.' No one wishes to see it continued, and the approaching convention will send it to the Capulets, if it do nothing else to be commended. It was a pitiful imitation of the House of Lords system, with this striking difference: the English lords are men of education, and men with a vast deal at stake, and their knowledge and interests teach them to leave the settlement of appeals to the legal men of their body, of whom there are always a respectable number, in addition to those in possession of the woolsack and the bench; whereas our Senate is a court composed of small lawyers, country doctors, merchants, farmers, with occasionally a man of really liberal attainments. Under the direction of an acute and honest judge, as most of our true judges actually are, the Court of Errors would hardly form such a jury as would allow a creditable person to be tried by his peers, in a

case affecting character, for instance, and here we have it set up as a court of the last resort, to settle points of law!"

"I see it has just made a decision in a libel suit, at which the profession sneers."

"It has, indeed. Now look at that very decision, for instance, as the measure of its knowledge. An editor of a newspaper holds up a literary man to the world as one anxious to obtain a small sum of money, in order to put it into Wall-street, for 'shaving purposes.' Now, the only material question raised was the true signification of the word 'shaving.' If to say a man is a 'shaver,' in the sense in which it is applied to the use of money, be bringing him into discredit, then was the plaintiff's declaration sufficient; if not, it was insufficient, being wanting in what is called an 'innuendo.' The dictionaries, and men in general, understand by 'shaving,' 'extortion,' and nothing else. To call a man a 'shaver' is to say he is an 'extortioner,' without going into details. But, in Wall-street, and among money-dealers, certain transactions that, in their eyes, and by the courts, are not deemed discreditable, have of late been brought within the category of 'shaving.' Thus it is technically, or by con-

vention among brokers, termed 'shaving' if a man buy a note at less than its face, which is a legal transaction. On the strength of this last circumstance, *as is set forth in the published opinions*, the highest Court of Appeals in New York has decided it does not bring a man into discredit to say he is a 'shaver!'—thus making a conventional signification of the brokers of Wall-street higher authority for the use of the English tongue than the standard lexicographers, and all the rest of those who use the language! On the same principle, if a set of pickpockets, at the Five Points, should choose to mystify their trade a little by including in the term 'to filch,' the literal *borrowing* of a pocket-handkerchief, it would not be a libel to accuse a citizen of 'filching his neighbour's handkerchief!'"

"But the libel was uttered to the *world*, and not to the brokers of Wall-street only, who might possibly understand their own terms."

"Very true; and was uttered in a newspaper that carried the falsehood to Europe; for the writer of the charge, when brought up for it, publicly admitted that he had no ground for suspecting the literary man of any such practices. *He* called it a '*joke*.' Every line of the context,

however, showed it was a malicious charge. The decision is very much as if a man who is sued for accusing another of 'stealing' should set up a defence that he meant 'stealing' hearts, for the word is sometimes used in *that* sense. When men use epithets that convey discredit in their general meaning, it is their business to give them a special signification in their own contexts, if such be their real intention. But I much question if there be a respectable money-dealer, even in Wall-street, who would not swear, if called on in a court of justice so to do, that *he* thought the general charge of 'shaving' discreditable to any man."

"And you think the landlords whose rents were taxed, sir, would have a moral right to resist?"

"Beyond all question; as it would be an income tax on them only, of all in the country. What is more, I am fully persuaded that two thousand men embodied to resist such tyranny would look down the whole available authority of the State; inasmuch as I do not believe citizens could be found to take up arms to enforce a law so flagrantly unjust. Men will look on passively and see wrongs inflicted, that would never come out to support them by their own

acts. But we are approaching the farm, and there is Tom Miller and his hired men waiting our arrival."

It is unnecessary to repeat, in detail, all that passed in this our second visit to the farm-house. Miller received us in a friendly manner, and offered us *a* bed, if we would pass the night with him. This business of *a* bed had given us more difficulty than any thing else, in the course of our peregrinations. New York has long got over the "two-man" and "three-man bed" system, as regards its best inns. At no respectable New York inn is a gentleman now asked to share even his room, without an apology and a special necessity, with another, much less his bed; but the rule does not hold good as respects pedlars and music-grinders. We had ascertained that we were not only expected to share the same bed, but to occupy that bed in a room filled with other beds. There are certain things that get to be second nature, and that no masquerading will cause to go down; and, among others, one gets to dislike sharing his room and his ooth-brush. This little difficulty gave us more trouble that night, at Tom Miller's, than anything we had yet encountered. At the taverns, bribes had answered our purpose;

but this would not do so well at a farm residence. At length the matter was got along with by putting me in the garret, where I was favoured with a straw bed under my own roof, the decent Mrs. Miller making many apologies for not having a feather-smotherer, in which to "squash" me. I did not tell the good woman that I never used feathers, summer or winter; for, had I done so, she would have set me down as a poor creature from "oppressed" Germany, where the "folks" did not know how to live. Nor would she have been so much out of the way *quoad* the beds, for in all my journeyings I never met with such uncomfortable sleeping as one finds in Germany, off the Rhine and out of the large towns.*

While the negotiation was in progress I observed that Josh Brigham, as the anti-rent disposed hireling of Miller's was called, kept a watchful eye and an open ear on what was done and said. Of all men on earth, the American of that class is the most "distrustful," as he calls it himself, and has his suspicions the soonest

* As the "honourable gentleman from Albany" does not seem to understand the precise signification of "provincial," I can tell him that one sign of such a character is to admire a bed at an American country inn.—EDITOR.

awakened. The Indian on the war-path—the sentinel who is posted in a fog, near his enemy, an hour before the dawn of day—the husband that is jealous, or the priest that has become a partisan, is not a whit more apt to fancy, conjecture, or assert, than the American of that class who has become "distrustful." This fellow, Brigham, was the very beau ideal of the suspicious school, being envious and malignant, as well as shrewd, observant, and covetous. The very fact that he was connected with the "Injins," as turned out to be the case, added to his natural propensities the consciousness of guilt, and rendered him doubly dangerous. The whole time my uncle and myself were crossing over and figuring in, in order to procure for each a room, though it were only a closet, his watchful, distrustful looks denoted how much he saw in our movements to awaken curiosity, if not downright suspicion. When all was over, he followed me to the little lawn in front of the house, whither I had gone to look at the familiar scene by the light of the setting sun, and began to betray the nature of his own suspicions by his language.

"The old man" (meaning my uncle Ro) "must have plenty of gold watches about him," he said,

"to be so plaguy partic'lar consarnin' his bed. Pedlin' sich matters is a ticklish trade, I guess, in some parts?"

"Ja; it ist dangerous somevhere, but it might not be so in dis goot coontry."

"Why did the old fellow, then, try so hard to get that little room all to himself, and shove you off into the garret? We hired men don't like the garret, which is a hot place in summer."

"In Charmany one man hast ever one bed," I answered, anxious to get rid of the subject.

I bounced a little, as "one has one-half of a bed" would be nearer to the truth, though the other half might be in another room.

"Oh! that's it, is't? Wa-a-l, every country has its ways, I s'pose. Jarmany is a desp'ate aristocratic land, I take it."

"Ja; dere ist moch of de old feudal law, and feudal coostum still remaining in Charmany."

"Landlords a plenty, I guess, if the truth was known. Leases as long as my arm, I calkerlate?"

"Vell, dey do dink, in Charmany, dat de longer might be de lease, de better it might be for de denant."

As that was purely a German sentiment, or at least not an American sentiment, according

to the notions broached by statesmen among ourselves, I made it as Dutch as possible by garnishing it well with d's.

"That's a droll idee! Now we think, here, that a lease is a bad thing; and the less you have of a bad thing, the better."

"Vell, dat *ist* queer; so queer ast I don't know! Vhat vill dey do as might help it?"

"Oh! the Legislature will set it all right. They mean to pass a law to prevent any more leases at all."

"Und vill de beople stand dat? Dis ist a free coontry, effery body dells me, and vilt der beoples agree not to hire lands if dey vants to?"

"Oh! you see we wish to choke the landlords off from their present leases; and, by and bye, when *that* is done, the law can let up again."

"But ist dat right? Der law should be joost, und not hold down und let oop, as you calls it."

"You don't understand us yet, I see. Why that's the prettiest and the neatest legislation on airth! That's just what the bankrupt law did."

"Vhat did der bankroopt law do, bray? Vhat might you mean now?—I don't know."

"Do! why it did wonders for some on us, I can tell you! It paid our debts, and let us up when we was down; and that's no trifle, I can tell you. I took 'the benefit,' as it is called, myself."

"You!—you might take der benefit of a bankroopt law! You, lifing here ast a hiret man, on dis farm!"

"Sartain; why not? All a man wanted, under *that* law, was about $60 to carry him through the mill; and if he could rake and scrape that much together, he might wipe off as long a score as he pleased. I had been dealin' in speckylation, and that's a make or break business, I can tell you. Well, I got to be about $423.22 wuss than nothin'; but, having about $90 in hand, I went through the mill without getting cogged the smallest morsel! A man doos a good business, to my notion, when he can make 20 cents pay a whull dollar of debt."

"Und you did dat goot business?"

"You may say that; and now I means to make anti-rentism get me a farm cheap—what *I* call cheap; and that an't none of your $30 or $40 an acre, I can tell you!"

It was quite clear that Mr. Joshua Brigham

regarded these transactions as so many Pragmatic Sanctions, that were to clear the moral and legal atmospheres of any atoms of difficulty that might exist in the forms of old opinions, to his getting easily out of debt, in the one case, and suddenly rich in the other. I dare say I looked bewildered, but I certainly felt so, at thus finding myself face to face with a low knave, who had a deliberate intention, as I now found, to rob me of a farm. It is certain that Joshua so imagined, for, inviting me to walk down the road with him a short distance, he endeavoured to clear up any moral difficulties that might beset me, by pursuing the subject.

"You see," resumed Joshua, "I will tell you how it is. These Littlepages have had this land long enough, and it's time to give poor folks a chance. The young spark that pretends to own all the farms you see, far and near, never *did* any thing for 'em in his life; only to be his father's son. Now, to my notion, a man should do suthin' for his land, and not be obligated for it to mere natur'. This is a free country, and what right has one man to land more than another?"

"Or do his shirt, or do his dobacco, or do his coat, or do anyding else?"

"Well, I don't go as far as that. A man has a right to his clothes, and maybe to a horse or a cow, but he has no right to all the land in creation. The law gives a right to a cow as ag'in' execution."

"Und doesn't der law gif a right to der landt, too? You most not depend on der law, if you might succeed."

"We like to get as much law as we can on our side. Americans like law: now, you'll read in all the books—*our* books, I mean, them that's printed here—that the Americans be the most lawful people on airth, and that they'll do more for the law than any other folks known!"

"Vell, dat isn't vhat dey says of der Americans in Europe; nein, nein, dey might not say dat."

"Why, don't you think it is so? Don't you think this the greatest country on airth, and the most lawful?"

"Vell, I don'ts know. Das coontry ist das coontry, und it ist vhat it ist, you might see."

"Yes; I thought you would be of my way of thinking, when we got to understand each other." Nothing is easier than to mislead an American on the estimate foreigners place on them: in this respect they are the most deluded

people living, though, in other matters, certainly among the shrewdest. "That's the way with acquaintances, at first; they don't always understand one another: and then you talk a little thick, like. But now, friend, I'll come to the p'int—but first swear you'll not betray me."

"Ja, ja—I oonderstandst; I most schwear I won't bedray you: das ist goot."

"But, hold up your hand. Stop; of what religion be you?"

"Gristian, to be sure. I might not be a Chew. Nein, nein; I am a ferry bat Gristian."

"We are all bad enough, for that matter; but I lay no stress on *that*. A little of the devil in a man helps him along, in this business of ourn. But you must be suthin' more than a Christian, I s'pose, as we don't call *that* bein' of any religion at all, in this country. Of what *supportin'* religion be you?"

"Soobortin'; vell, I might not oonderstands dat. Vhat ist soobortin' religion? Comes dat vrom Melanchton und Luther?—or coomes it vrom der Pope? Vhat ist dat soobortin' religion?"

"Why, what religion do you *patronize?* Do you patronize the standin' order or the kneelin' order?—or do you patronize neither? Some folks

thinks it's best to lie down at prayer, as the least likely to divart the thoughts."

"I might not oonderstand. But nefer mindt der religion, und coome to der p'int dat you mentioned."

"Well, that p'int is this. You're a Jarman, and can't like aristocrats, and so I'll trust you; though, if you do betray me, you'll never play on another bit of music in this country, or any other! If you want to be an Injin, as good an opportunity will offer to-morrow as ever fell in a man's way!"

"An Injin! Vhat goot vill it do to be an Injin? I dought it might be better to be a white man in America?"

"Oh! I mean only an anti-rent Injin. We've got matters so nicely fixed now, that a chap can be an Injin without any paint at all, or any washin' or scrubbin', but can convart himself into himself ag'in, at any time, in two minutes. The wages is good and the work light; then we have rare chances in the stores, and round about among the farms. The law is that an Injin must have what he wants, and no grumblin', and we take care to want enough. If you'll be at the meetin', I'll tell you how you'll know me."

"Ja, ja—dat ist goot; I vill be at der meetin', sartainly. Vhere might it be?"

"Down at the village. The word came up this a'ternoon, and we shall all be on the ground by ten o'clock."

"Vilt der be a fight, dat you meet so punctually, and wid so moch spirit?"

"Fight! Lord, no; who is there to fight, I should like to know? We are pretty much all ag'in the Littlepages, and there's none of them on the ground but two or three women. I'll tell you how it's all settled. The meetin' is called on the deliberative and liberty-supportin' plan. I s'pose you know we've all sorts of meetin's in this country?"

"Nein; I dought dere might be meetin's for bolitics, vhen der beople might coome, but I don't know vhat else."

"Is't possible! What, have you no 'indignation meetin's' in Jarmany? We count a great deal on our indignation meetin's, and both sides have 'em in abundance, when things get to be warm. Our meetin' to-morrow is for deliberation and liberty-principles generally. We may pass some indignation resolutions about aristocrats, for nobody can bear them critturs in this part of the country, I can tell you."

Lest this manuscript should get into the hands of some of those who do not understand the real condition of New York society, it may be well to explain that "aristocrat" means, in the parlance of the country, no other than a man of gentleman-like tastes, habits, opinions and associations. There are gradations among the aristocracy of the State, as well as among other men. Thus he who is an aristocrat in a hamlet, would be very democratic in a village; and he of the village might be no aristocrat in the town, at all; though, in the towns generally, indeed always, when their population has the least of a town character, the distinction ceases altogether, men quietly dropping into the traces of civilized society, and talking or thinking very little about it. To see the crying evils of American aristocracy, then, one must go into the country. There, indeed, a plenty of cases exist. Thus, if there happen to be a man whose property is assessed at twenty-five per cent. above that of all his neighbours—who must have right of his side bright as a cloudless sun to get a verdict, if obliged to appeal to the laws who pays fifty per cent. more for everything he buys, and receives fifty per cent. less for everything he sells, than any

other person near him—who is surrounded by rancorous enemies, in the midst of a seeming state of peace—who has everything he says and does perverted, and added to, and lied about—who is traduced because his dinner-hour is later than that of "other folks"—who don't stoop, but is straight in the back—who presumes to doubt that this country in general, and his own township in particular, is the focus of civilization—who hesitates about signing his name to any grant instance of ignorance, bad taste, or worse morals, that his neighbours may get up in the shape of a petition, remonstrance, or resolution—depend on it that man is a prodigious aristocrat, and one who, for his many offences and manner of lording it over mankind, deserves to be banished. I ask the reader's pardon for so abruptly breaking in upon Joshua's speech, but such very different notions exist about aristocrats, in different parts of the world, that some such explanation was necessary in order to prevent mistakes. I have forgotten one mark of the tribe that is, perhaps, more material than all the rest, which must not be omitted, and is this:—If he happen to be a man who prefers his own pursuits to public life, and is regardless of "popularity," he is just guilty

of the unpardonable sin. The "people" will forgive anything sooner than this; though there are "folks" who fancy it as infallible a sign of an aristocrat not to chew tobacco. But, unless I return to Joshua, the reader will complain that I cause him to stand still.

"No, no," continued Mr. Brigham; "anything but an aristocrat for me. I hate the very name of the sarpents, and wish there warn't one in the land. To-morrow we are to have a great anti-rent lecturer out——"

"A vhat?"

"A lecturer; one that lectur's, you understand, on anti-rentism, temperance, aristocracy, government, or any other grievance that may happen to be uppermost. Have you no lecturers in Jarmany?"

"Ja, ja; dere ist lecturers in das universities —blenty of dem."

"Well, we have 'em universal and partic'lar, as we happen to want 'em. To-morrow we're to have one, they tell me, the smartest man that has appeared in the cause. He goes it strong, and the Injins mean to back him up, with all sorts of shrieks and whoopin's. Your hurdy-gurdy, there, makes no sort of music to what our tribe can make when we fairly open our throats."

"Vell, dis ist queer! I vast told dat der Americans vast all philosophers, und dat all dey didt vast didt in a t'oughtful and sober manner; und now you dells me dey screams deir arguments like Injins!"

"That we do! I wish you'd been here in the hard-cider and log-cabin times, and you'd a seen reason and philosophy, as you call it! I was a whig that summer, though I went democrat last season. There's about five hundred on us in this county that make the most of things, I can tell you. What's the use of a vote, if a body gets nothin' by it? But to-morrow you'll see the business done up, and matters determined for this part of the world, in fine style. We know what we're about, and we mean to carry things through quite to the eend."

"Und vhat do you means to do?"

"Well, seein' that you seem to be of the right sort, and be so likely to put on the Injin shirt, I'll tell you all about it. We mean to get good and old farms at favourable rates. That's what we mean to do. The people's up and in 'arnest, and what the people want they'll have! This time they want farms, and farms they must have. What's the use of havin' a government of the people, if the people's obliged

to want farms? We've begun ag'in' the Rensselaers, and the durables, and the quarter-sales, and the chickens; but we don't, by no manner of means, think of eending there. What should we get by that? A man wants to get suthin' when he puts his foot into a matter of this natur'. We know who's our fri'nds and whose our inimies! Could we have some men I could name for governors, all would go clear enough the first winter. We would tax the landlords out, and law 'em about in one way and another, so as to make 'em right down glad to sell the last rod of their lands, and that cheap, too!"

"Und who might own dese farms, all oop und down der coontry, dat I sees?"

"As the law now stands, Littlepage owns 'em; but if we alter the law enough, he wun't. If we can only work the Legislature up to the stickin' p'int, we shall get all we want. Would you believe it, the man wun't sell a single farm, they say; but wishes to keep every one on 'em for himself! Is that to be borne in a free country? They'd hardly stand that in Jarmany, I'm thinkin'. A man that is such an aristocrat as to refuse to sell anything, I despise."

"Vell, dey stand to der laws in Charmany, und broperty is respected in most countries.

You vouldn't do away wid der rights of broperty, if you mights, I hopes?"

"Not I. If a man owns a watch, or a horse, or a cow, I'm for having the law such that a poor man can keep 'em, even ag'in execution. We're getting the laws pretty straight on them p'ints, in old York, I can tell you; a poor man, let him be ever so much in debt, can hold on to a mighty smart lot of things, now-a-days, and laugh at the law right in its face! I've known chaps that owed as much as two hundred dollars, hold on to as good as three hundred dollars; though most of their debts was for the very things they held on to!"

What a picture is this! yet is it not true? A state of society in which a man can contract a debt for a cow, or his household goods, and laugh at his creditor when he seeks his pay, on the one hand; and on the other, legislators and executives lending themselves to the chicanery of another set, that are striving to deprive a particular class of its rights of property, directly in the face of written contracts! This is straining at the gnat and swallowing the camel, with a vengeance; and all for votes! Does any one really expect a community can long exist, favoured by a wise and justice-dispensing Pro-

vidence, in which such things are coolly attempted—ay, and coolly done? It is time that the American began to see things as they are, and not as they are *said* to be, in the speeches of governors, fourth of July orations, and electioneering addresses. I write warmly, I know, but I feel warmly; and I write like a man who sees that a most flagitious attempt to rob him is tampered with by some in power, instead of being met, as the boasted morals and intelligence of the country would require, by the stern opposition of all in authority. Curses—deep, deep curses—ere long, will fall on all who shrink from their duty in such a crisis. Even the very men who succeed, if succeed they should, will, in the end, curse the instruments of their own success.*

* That Mr. Hugh Littlepage does not feel or express himself too strongly on the state of things that has now existed among us for long, long years, the following case, but one that illustrates the melancholy truth among many, will show. At a time when the tenants of an extensive landlord, to whom tens of thousands were owing for rent, were openly resisting the law, and defeating every attempt to distrain, though two ordinary companies of even armed constables would have put them down, the sheriff entered the house of that very landlord, and levied on his furniture for debt. Had that gentleman, on the just and pervading principle that he owed no allegiance to an authority that did not protect him, resisted the sheriff's officer, *he* would have gone to the State's prison; and there

"A first-rate lecturer on feudal tenors," (Joshua was not in the least particular in his language, but, in the substance, he knew what he was talking about as well as some who are in high places,) "chickens and days' works. We expect a great deal from this man, who is paid well for coming."

"Und who might bay him?—der State?"

"No—we haven't got to that *yet*; though some think the State will *have* to do it, in the long run. At present the tenants are taxed so much on the dollar, accordin' to rent, or so much an acre, and that way the needful money is raised. But one of our lecturers told us, a time back, that it was money put out at use, and every man ought to keep an account of what he give, for the time was not far off when he would get it back, with double interest. 'It is paid now for a reform,' he said, 'and when the reform is obtained, no doubt the State would feel itself so much indebted to us all, that it would tax the late landlords until we got all our money back again, and more too.'"

"Dat vould pe a bretty speculation; ja, dat might be most bootiful!"

he might have staid until his last hour of service was expended. —EDITOR.

"Why, yes; it wouldn't be a bad operation, living on the inimy, as a body might say. But you'll not catch our folks living on themselves, I can tell you. That they might do without societies. No, we've an object; and when folks has an object, they commonly look sharp a'ter it. We don't let on all we want and mean openly: and you'll find folks among us that'll deny stoutly that anti-renters has anything to do with the Injin system; but folks an't obliged to believe the moon is *all* cheese, unless they've a mind to. Some among us maintain that no man ought to hold more than a thousand acres of land, while others think natur' has laid down the law on that p'int, and that a man shouldn't hold more than he has need on."

"Und vich side dost you favour?—vich of dese obinions might not be yours?"

"I'm not partic'lar, so I get a good farm. I should like one with comfortable buildin's on't, and one that hasn't been worked to death. For them two principles I think I'd stand out; but, whether there be four hundred acres, or four hundred and fifty, or even five hundred, I'm no way onaccomadatin'. I expect there'll be trouble in the eend, when we come to the division, but I'm not the man to make it. I

s'pose I shall get my turn at the town offices, and other chances, and, givin' me my rights in them, I'll take up with almost any farm young Littlepage has, though I should rather have one in the main valley here, than one more out of the way; still, I don't set myself down as at all partic'lar."

"Und vhat do you expect to bay Mr. Littlepage for der farm, ast you might choose?"

"That depends on sarcumstances. The Injins mainly expect to come in cheap. Some folks think it's best to pay suthin', as it might stand ag'in' law better, should it come to that; while other some see no great use in paying anything. Them that's willing to pay, mainly hold out for paying the principal of the first rents."

"I doesn't oonderstandt vhat you means py der brincipal of der first rents."

"It's plain enough, when you get the lay on't. You see, these lands were let pretty low, when they were first taken up from the forest, in order to get folks to live here. That's the way we're obliged to do in America, or people won't come. Many tenants paid no rent at all for six, eight, or ten years; and a'ter that, until their three lives run out, as it is called, they paid only sixpence an acre, or six dollars and

a quarter on the hundred acres. That was done, you see, to buy men to come here at all; and you can see by the price that was paid, how hard a time they must have had on't. Now, some of our folks hold that the whull time ought to be counted—that which was rent-free, and that which was not—in a way that I'll explain to you; for I'd have you to know I haven't entered into this business without looking to the right and the wrong on't."

"Exblain, exblain; I might hear you exblain, and you most exblain."

"Why, you're in a hurry, friend Griezenbach, or whatever your name be. But I'll explain, if you wish it. S'pose, now, a lease run thirty years—ten on nothin', and twenty on sixpences. Well, a hundred sixpences make fifty shillings, and twenty times fifty make a thousand, as all the rent paid in thirty years. If you divide a thousand by thirty, it leaves thirty-three shillings and a fraction"—Joshua calculated like an American of his class, accurately and with rapidity—"for the average rent of the thirty years. Calling thirty-three shillings four dollars, and it's plaguy little more, we have that for the interest, which, at 7 per cent., will make a principal of rather more than fifty dollars,

though not as much as sixty. As sich matters ought to be done on liberal principles, they say that Littlepage ought to take fifty dollars, and give a deed for the hundred acres."

"Und vhat might be der rent of a hoondred acres now?—he might get more dan sixpence to-day?"

"That he does. Most all of the farms are running out on second, and some on third leases. Four shillings an acre is about the average of the rents, accordin' to circumstances."

"Den you dinks der landtlort ought to accept one year's rent for der farms?"

"I don't look on it in that light. He ought to take fifty dollars for a hundred acres. You forget the tenants have paid for their farms, over and over again, in rent. They *feel* as if they have paid enough, and that it was time to stop."

Extraordinary as this reasoning may seem in most men's minds, I have since found it is a very favourite sentiment among anti-renters. "Are we to go on, and pay rent for ever?" they ask, with logical and virtuous indignation!

"Und vhat may be der aferage value of a hoondred acre farm, in dis part of de coontry?" I inquired.

"From two thousand five hundred to three thousand dollars. It would be more, but tenants won't put good buildings on farms, you know, seein' that they don't own them. I heard one of our leaders lamentin' that he didn't foresee what times was comin' to, when he repaired his old house, or he would have built a new one. But a man can't foretell everything. I dare say many has the same feelin's, now."

"Den you dinks Herr Littlebage ought to accept fifty dollars for vhat is worth two thousand five hundred dollars? Das seem ferry little."

"You forget the back rent that has been paid, and the work the tenant has done. What would the farm be good for without the work that has been done on it?"

"Ja, ja—I oonderstandst; und vhat vould der work be goot for vidout der landt on vhich it vast done?"

This was rather an incautious question to put to a man as distrustful and rogueish as Joshua Brigham. The fellow cast a lowering and distrustful look at me; but ere there was time to answer, Miller, of whom he stood in healthful awe, called him away to look after the cows.

Here, then, I had enjoyed an opportunity of

hearing the opinions of one of my own hirelings on the interesting subject of my right to my own estate. I have since ascertained that, while these sentiments are sedulously kept out of view in the proceedings of the government, which deals with the whole matter as if the tenants were nothing but martyrs to hard bargains, and the landlords their task-masters, of greater or less lenity, they are extensively circulated in the "infected districts," and are held to be very sound doctrines by a large number of the "bone and sinew of the land." Of course the reasoning is varied a little, to suit circumstances, and to make it meet the facts. But of this school is a great deal, and a very great deal, of the reasoning that circulates on the leased property; and, from what I have seen and heard already, I make no doubt that there are *quasi* legislators among us who, instead of holding the manly and only safe doctrine which ought to be held on such a subject, and saying that these deluded men should be taught better, are ready to cite the very fact that such notions do exist as a reason for the necessity of making concessions, in order to keep the peace at the cheapest rate. That profound principle of legislation, which concedes the right in order to

maintain quiet, is admirably adapted to forming sinners; and, if carried out in favour of all who may happen to covet their neighbour's goods, would, in a short time, render this community the very paradise of knaves.

As for Joshua Brigham, I saw no more of him that night; for he quitted the farm on leave, just as it got to be dark. Where he went I do not know; but the errand on which he left us could no longer be a secret to me. As the family retired early, and we ourselves were a good deal fatigued, everybody was in bed by nine o'clock, and, judging from myself, soon asleep. Previously to saying "good night," however, Miller told us of the meeting of the next day, and of his intention to attend it.

CHAPTER III.

"He knows the game; how true he keeps the wind!"
"Silence."
King Henry VI.

After an early breakfast, next morning, the signs of preparation for a start became very apparent in the family. Not only Miller, but his wife and daughter, intended to go down to "Little Neest," as the hamlet was almost invariably called in that fragment of the universe, in contradistinction to the "Neest" proper. I found afterwards that this very circumstance was cited against me in the controversy, it being thought *lèse majesté* for a private residence to monopolize the major of the proposition, while a hamlet had to put up with the minor; the latter, moreover, including two taverns, which are exclusively the property of the public, there being exclusiveness with the public as

well as with aristocrats—more especially in all things that pertain to power or profit. As to the two last, even Joshua Brigham was much more of an aristocrat than I was myself. It must be admitted that the Americans are a humane population, for they are the only people who deem that bankruptcy gives a claim to public favour.*

As respects the two "Nests," had not so much more serious matter been in agitation, the precedence of the names might actually have been taken up as a question of moment. I have heard of a lawsuit in France touching a name that has been illustrious in that country for a period so long as to extend beyond the reach of man—as, indeed, was apparent by the matter in controversy—and which name has obtained for itself a high place in the annals of even our own republic. I allude to the House of Grasse, which was seated prior to the revolution, and may be still, at a place called Grasse, in the southern part of the kingdom, the town being almost as famous for the manu-

* Absurd as this may seem, it is nevertheless true, and for a reason that is creditable, rather than the reverse—a wish to help along the unfortunate. It is a great mistake, however, as a rule, to admit of any other motive for selecting for public trusts, than qualification.—EDITOR.

facture of pleasant things as the family for its exploits in arms. About a century since, the Marquis de Grasse is said to have had a *procès* with his neighbours of the place, to establish the fact whether the family gave its name to the town, or the town gave its name to the family. The Marquis prevailed in the struggle, but greatly impaired his fortune in achieving that new victory. As my house, or its predecessor, was certainly erected and named while the site of Little Nest was still in the virgin forest, one would think its claims to the priority of possession beyond dispute; but such might not prove to be the case on a trial. There are two histories among us, as relates to both public and private things; the one being as nearly true as is usual, while the other is invariably the fruits of the human imagination. Everything depending so much on majorities, that soon gets to be the most authentic tradition which has the most believers; for, under the system of numbers, little regard is paid to superior advantages, knowledge, or investigation, all depending on three as against two, which makes one majority. I find a great deal of this spurious history is getting to be mixed up with the anti-rent controversy, facts coming out daily that long

have lain dormant in the graves of the past. These facts affect the whole structure of the historical picture of the State and colony, leaving touches of black where the pencil had originally put in white, and placing the high lights where the shadows have before always been understood to be. In a word, men are telling the stories as best agrees with their present views, and not at all as they agree with fact.

It was the intention of Tom Miller to give my uncle Ro and me a dearborn to ourselves, while he drove his wife, Kitty and a *help*, as far as the "Little Neest," in a two-horse vehicle that was better adapted to such a freight. Thus disposed of, then, we all left the place in company, just as the clock in the farm-house entry struck nine. I drove our horse myself; and *mine* he was, in fact, every hoof, vehicle and farming utensil on the Nest farm, being as much my property, under the *old* laws, as the hat on my head. It is true the Millers had now been fifty years or more, nay, nearly sixty, in possession, and by the *new* mode of construction it is possible some may fancy that we had paid them wages so long for working the land, and for using the cattle and utensils, that the title,

in a moral sense, had passed out of me, in order to pass into Tom Miller. If use begets a right, why not to a waggon and horse, as well as to a farm?

As we left the place, I gazed wistfully towards the Nest House, in the hope of seeing the form of some one that I loved, at a window, on the lawn, or in the piazza. Not a soul appeared, however, and we trotted down the road a short distance in the rear of the other waggon, conversing on such things as came uppermost in our minds. The distance we had to go was about four miles, and the hour named for the commencement of the lecture, which was to be the great affair of the day, had been named at eleven. This caused us to be in no hurry, and I rather preferred to coincide with the animal I drove, and move very slowly, than hurry on, and arrive an hour or two sooner than was required. In consequence of this feeling on our part, Miller and his family were soon out of sight, it being their wish to obtain as much of the marvels of the day as was possible.

The road, of course, was perfectly well known to my uncle and myself; but, had it not been, there was no danger of missing our way, as we had only to follow the general direction of the

broad valley through which it ran. Then Miller had considerately told us that we must pass two churches, or a church and a "meetin'-us';" the spires of both of which were visible most of the way, answering for beacons. Referring to this term of "meeting-house," does it not furnish conclusive evidence, of itself, of the inconsistent folly of that wisest of all earthly beings, man? It was adopted in contradistinction from, and in direct opposition to, the supposed idolatrous association connected with the use of the word "church," at a time when certain sects would feel offended at hearing their places of worship thus styled; whereas, at the present day, those very sectarians are a little disposed to resent this exclusive appropriation of the prescribed word by the sects who have always adhered to it as offensively presuming, and, in a slight degree, "arisdogradic!" I am a little afraid that your out-and-outers in politics, religion, love of liberty, and other human excellences, are somewhat apt to make these circuits in their eccentric orbits, and to come out somewhere quite near the places from which they started.

The road between the Nest House and Little Nest, the hamlet, is rural, and quite as agreeable as is usually found in a part of the country

that is without water-views or mountain scenery. Our New York landscapes are rarely, nay, never grand, as compared with the noble views one finds in Italy, Switzerland, Spain, and the finer parts of Europe; but we have a vast many that want nothing but a finish to their artificial accessories to render them singularly agreeable. Such is the case with the principal vale of Ravensnest, which, at the very moment we were driving through it, struck my uncle and myself as presenting a picture of rural abundance, mingled with rural comfort, that one seldom sees in the old world, where the absence of enclosures, and the concentration of the dwellings in villages, leave the fields naked and with a desolate appearance, in spite of their high tillage and crops.

"This is an estate worth contending for, now," said my uncle, as we trotted slowly on, "although it has not hitherto been very productive to its owner. The first half century of an American property of this sort rarely brings much to its proprietor beyond trouble and vexation."

"And after that time the tenant is to have it, pretty much at his own price, as a reward for his own labour!"

"What evidences are to be found, wherever the eye rests, of the selfishness of man, and his unfitness to be left to the unlimited control of his own affairs! In England they are quarrelling with the landlords, who *do* compose a real aristocracy, and make the laws, about the manner in which they protect themselves and the products of their estates; while here the true owner of the soil is struggling against the power of numbers, with the people, who are the only aristocrats we possess, in order to maintain his right of property in the simplest and most naked form! A common vice is at the bottom of both wrongs, and that is the vice of selfishness."

"But how are abuses like those of which we complain here—abuses of the most formidable character of any that can exist, since the oppressors are so many, and so totally irresponsible by their numbers—to be avoided, if you give the people the right of self-government?"

"God help the nation where self-government, in its literal sense, exists, Hugh! The term is conventional, and, properly viewed, means a government in which the source of authority is the body of the nation, and does not come from any other sovereign. When

a people that has been properly educated by experience calmly selects its agents, and coolly sets to work to adopt a set of principles to form its fundamental law or constitution, the machine is on the right track, and will work well enough so long as it is kept there; but this running off, and altering the fundamental principles every time a political faction has need of recruits, is introducing tyranny in its worst form—a tyranny that is just as dangerous to real liberty as hypocrisy is to religion!"

We were now approaching St. Andrew's church and the rectory, with its glebe, the latter lying contiguous to the church-yard, or, as it is an Americanism to say, the "grave-yard." There had been an evident improvement around the rectory since I had last seen it. Shrubbery had been planted, care was taken of the fences, the garden was neatly and well worked, the fields looked smooth, and everything denoted that it was "new lords and new laws." The last incumbent had been a whining, complaining, narrow-minded, selfish and lazy priest, the least estimable of all human characters, short of the commission of the actual and higher crimes; but his successor had the reputation of being a devout and real Christian,

one who took delight in the duties of his holy office, and who served God because he loved him. I am fully aware how laborious is the life of a country priest, and how contracted and mean is the pittance he in common receives, and how much more he merits than he gets, if his reward were to be graduated by things here. But this picture, like every other, has its different sides, and occasionally men do certainly enter the church from motives as little as possible connected with those that ought to influence them.

"There is the wagon of Mr. Warren, at his door," observed my uncle, as we passed the rectory. "Can it be that he intends visiting the village also, on an occasion like this?"

"Nothing more probable, sir, if the character Patt has given of him be true," I answered. "She tells me he has been active in endeavouring to put down the covetous spirit that is getting uppermost in the town, and has even preached boldly, though generally, against the principles involved in the question. The other man, they say, goes for popularity, and preaches and prays with the anti-renters."

No more was said, but on we went, soon entering a large bit of wood, a part of the virgin

forest. This wood, exceeding a thousand acres in extent, stretched down from the hills along some broken and otherwise little valuable land, and had been reserved from the axe to meet the wants of some future day. It was mine, therefore, in the fullest sense of the word; and, singular as it may seem, one of the grounds of accusation brought against me and my predecessors was that we had *declined leasing it!* Thus, on the one hand, we were abused for having leased our land, and, on the other, for not having leased it. The fact is, we, in common with other extensive landlords, are expected to use our property as much as possible for the particular benefit of other people, while those other people are expected to use *their* property as much as possible for their own particular benefit.

There was near a mile of forest to pass before we came out again in the open country, at about a mile and a half's distance from the hamlet. On our left this little forest did not extend more than a hundred rods, terminating at the edge of the rivulet—or *creek*, as the stream is erroneously called, and for no visible reason but the fact that it was only a hundred feet wide—which swept close under the broken ground

mentioned at this point. On our right, however, the forest stretched away for more than a mile, until, indeed, it became lost and confounded with other portions of wood that had been reserved for the farms on which they grew. As is very usual in America, in cases where roads pass through a forest, a second growth had shot up on each side of this highway, which was fringed for the whole distance with large bushes of pine, hemlock, chestnut and maple. In some places these bushes almost touched the track, while in others a large space was given. We were winding our way through this wood, and had nearly reached its centre, at a point where no house was visible—and no house, indeed, stood within half a mile of us—with the view in front and in rear limited to some six or eight rods in each direction by the young trees, when our ears were startled by a low, shrill, banditti-like whistle. I must confess that my feelings were anything but comfortable at that interruption, for I remembered the conversation of the previous night. I thought by the sudden jump of my uncle, and the manner he instinctively felt where he ought to have had a pistol, to meet such a crisis, that he believed himself already in the hands of the Philistines.

A half minute sufficed to tell us the truth. I had hardly stopped the horse, in order to look around me, when a line of men, all armed and disguised, issued in single file from the bushes, and drew up in the road, at right angles to its course. There were six of these "Injins," as they are called, and, indeed, call themselves, each carrying a rifle, horn and pouch, and otherwise equipped for the field. The disguises were very simple, consisting of a sort of loose calico hunting-shirt and trowsers that completely concealed the person. The head was covered by a species of hood, or mask, equally of calico, that was fitted with holes for the eyes, nose and mouth, and which completed the disguise. There were no means of recognizing a man thus equipped, unless it might be by the stature, in cases in which the party was either unusually tall or unusually short. A middle-sized man was perfectly safe from recognition, so long as he did not speak and could keep his equipments. Those who did speak altered their voices, as we soon found, using a jargon that was intended to imitate the imperfect English of the native owners of the soil. Although neither of us had ever seen one of the gang before, we knew these disturbers of the public peace to be what in

truth they were, the instant our eyes fell on them. One could not well be mistaken, indeed, under the circumstances in which we were placed; but the tomahawks that one or two carried, the manner of their march, and other pieces of mummery that they exhibited, would have told us the fact, had we met them even in another place.

My first impulse was to turn the wagon, and to endeavour to lash the lazy beast I drove into a run. Fortunately, before the attempt was made, I turned my head to see if there was room for such an exploit, and saw six others of these "Injins" drawn across the road behind us. It was now so obviously the wisest course to put the best face on the matter, that we walked the horse boldly up to the party in front, until he was stopped by one of the gang taking him by the bridle.

"Sago, sago," cried one who seemed to act as a chief, and whom I shall thus designate, speaking in his natural voice, though affecting an Indian pronunciation. "How do, how do? —where come from, eh?—where go, eh?—What you say, too—up rent or down rent, eh?"

"Ve ist two Charmans," returned uncle Ro, in his most desperate dialect, the absurdity of

men who spoke the same language resorting to such similar means of deception tempting me sorely to laugh in the fellows' faces; "Ve ist two Charmans dat ist goin' to hear a man sbeak about bayin' rent, und to sell vatches. Might you buy a vatch, goot shentlèmans?"

Although the fellows doubtless knew who we were, so far as our assumed characters went, and had probably been advised of our approach, this bait took, and there was a general jumping up and down, and a common pow-wowing among them, indicative of the pleasure such a proposal gave. In a minute the whole party were around us, with some eight or ten more who appeared from the nearest bushes. We were helped out of the wagon with a gentle violence that denoted their impatience. As a matter of course, I expected that all the trinkets and watches, which were of little value, fortunately, would immediately disappear; for who could doubt that men engaged in attempting to rob on so large a scale as these fellows were engaged in, would hesitate about doing a job on one a little more diminutive. I was mistaken, however; some sort of imperceptiple discipline keeping those who were thus disposed, of whom there must have been some in such a party, in

temporary order. The horse was left standing in the middle of the highway, right glad to take his rest, while we were shown the trunk of a fallen tree, near by, on which to place our box of wares. A dozen watches were presently in the hands of as many of these seeming savages, who manifested a good deal of admiration at their shining appearance. While this scene, which was half mummery and half nature, was in enactment, the chief beckoned me to a seat on the further end of the tree, and, attended by one or two of his companions, he began to question me as follows:

"Mind tell truth," he said, making no very expert actor in the way of imitation. "Dis 'Streak o' Lightning,'" laying his hand on his own breast, that I might not misconceive the person of the warrior who bore so eminent a title; "no good lie to him—know ebbery t'ing afore he ask, only ask for fun—what do here, eh?"

"Ve coomes to see der Injins und der beoples at der village, dat ve might sell our vatches."

"Dat all; sartain?—can call 'down rent,' eh?'"

"Dat ist ferry easy; 'down rent, eh?'"

"Sartain Jarman, eh?—you no spy?—you no sent here by gubbernor, eh?—landlord no pay you, eh?"

"What might I spy? Dere ist nothin' to spy, but mans vid calico faces. Vhy been you afraid of der governor?—I dinks der governors be ferry goot frients of der anti-rents."

"Not when we act this way. Send horse, send foot a'ter us den. T'ink good friend, too, when he dare."

"He be d——d!" bawled out one of the tribe, in as good, homely, rustic English as ever came out of the mouth of a clown. "If he's our friend, why did he send the artillery and horse down to Hudson?—and why has he had Big Thunder up afore his infarnal courts? He be d——d!"

There was no mistaking this outpouring of the feelings; and so "Streak o' Lightning" seemed to think too, for he whispered one of the tribe, who took the plain-speaking Injin by the arm and led him away, grumbling and growling, as the thunder mutters in the horizon after the storm has passed on. For myself, I made several profitable reflections concerning the inevitable fate of those who attempt to "serve God and Mammon." This anti-rentism

is a question in which, so far as a governor is concerned, there is but one course to pursue, and that is to enforce the laws by suppressing violence, and leaving the parties to the covenants of leases to settle their differences in the courts, like the parties to any other contracts. It is a poor rule that will not work both ways. Many a landlord has made a hard bargain for himself; and I happen to know of one case in particular, in which a family has long been, and is still, kept out of the enjoyment of a very valuable estate, as to any benefit of importance, purely by the circumstance that a weak-minded possessor of the property fancied he was securing souls for paradise by letting his farms on leases for ninety-nine years, at nominal rents, with a covenant that the tenant should go twice to a particular church! Now, nothing is plainer than that it is a greater hardship to the citizen who is the owner of many farms so situated, than to the citizen who is the lessee of only one with a hard covenant; and, on general principles, the landlord in question would be most entitled to relief, since one man who suffers a good deal is more an object of true commiseration than many who suffer each a little. What

would a governor be apt to say if my landlord should go with his complaints to the foot of the executive chair, and tell him that the very covenant which had led his predecessor into the mistake of thus wasting his means was openly disregarded; that farms worth many thousands of dollars had now been enjoyed by the tenants for near a century for mere nominal rents, and that the owner of the land in fee had occasion for his property, &c. &c. Would the governor recommend legislative action in that case? Would the *length* of *such* leases induce him to recommend that no lease should exceed five years in duration? Would the landlords who should get up a corps of Injins to worry their tenants into an abandonment of their farms be the objects of commisseration?—and would the law slumber for years over *their* rebellions and depredations, until two or three murders aroused public indignation? Let them answer that know. As a landlord, I should be sorry to incur the ridicule that would attend even a public complaint of the hardships of such a case. A common sneer would send me to the courts for my remedy, if I had one, and the whole difference between the "if and ifs" of the two cases

would be that a landlord gives but one vote, while his tenants may be legion.*

"He be d——d," muttered the plain-speaking Injin, as long as I could hear him. As soon as released from his presence, Streak of Lightning continued his examination, though a little vexed at the undramatical character of the interruption.

"Sartain no spy, eh?—sartain gubbenor no send him, eh?—sartain come to sell watch, eh?"

"I coomes, as I tell ye, to see if vatches might be solt, und not for der gobbernor; I neffer might see der mans."

As all this was true, my conscience felt pretty easy on the score of whatever there might be equivocal about it.

"What folks think of Injin down below, eh?—what folks say of anti-rent, eh?—hear him talk about much?"

"Vell, soome does dink anti-rent ist goot, und soome does dink anti-rent ist bad. Dey dinks as dey wishes."

Here a low whistle came down the road, or rather down the bushes, when every Injin started up; each man very fairly gave back the

* This is no invented statement, but strictly one that is true, the writer having himself a small interest in a property so situated; though he has not yet bethought him of applying to the Legislature for relief.—Editor.

watch he was examining, and in less than half a minute we were alone on the log. This movement was so sudden that it left us in a little doubt as to the proper mode of proceeding. My uncle, however, coolly set about replacing his treasures in their box, while I went to the horse, which had shaken off his head-stall, and was quietly grazing along the road-side. A minute or two might have been thus occupied, when the trotting of a horse and the sound of wheels announced the near approach of one of those vehicles which have got to be almost national; a dearborn, or a one-horse wagon. As it came out from behind a screen of bushes formed by a curvature in the road, I saw that it contained the Rev. Mr. Warren and his sweet daughter.

The road being narrow, and our vehicle in its centre, it was not possible for the new-comers to proceed until we got out of the way, and the divine pulled up as soon as he reached the spot where we stood.

"Good morning, *gentlemen*," said Mr. Warren, cordially, and using a word that, in *his* mouth, I felt meant all it expressed. "Good morning, *gentlemen*. Are you playing Handel to the wood-nymphs, or reciting eclogues?"

"Neider, neider, Herr Pastor; we meet wid coostomers here, und dey has just left us," answered uncle Ro, who certainly enacted his part with perfect *àplomb*, and the most admirable mimicry as to manner. "*Guten tag, guten tag.* Might der Herr Pastor be going to der village?"

"We are. I understand there is to be a meeting there of the misguided men called anti-renters, and that several of my parishioners are likely to be present. On such an occasion I conceive it to be my duty to go among my own particular people, and whisper a word of advice. Nothing can be further from my notions of propriety than for a clergyman to be mingling and mixing himself up with political concerns in general; but this is a matter that touches morality, and the minister of God is neglectful of his duty who keeps aloof, when a word of admonition might aid in preventing some wavering brother from the commission of a grievous sin. This last consideration has brought me out to a scene I could otherwise most heartily avoid."

This might be well enough, I said to myself, but what has your daughter to do in such a scene? Is the mind of Mary Warren, then,

after all, no better than vulgar minds in general?—and can she find a pleasure in the excitement of lectures of this cast, and in that of public meetings? No surer test can be found of cultivation, than the manner in which it almost intuitively shrinks from communion unnecessarily with tastes and principles below its own level; yet here was the girl with whom I was already half in love,—and that was saying as little as could be said, too,—actually going down to the "Little Neest" to hear an itinerant lecturer on political economy utter his crudities, and to see and be seen! I was grievously disappointed, and would at the moment have cheerfully yielded the best farm on my estate to have had the thing otherwise. My uncle must have had some similar notion, by the remark he made.

"Und doost das *jung frau* go to see der Injins too; to bersuade 'em dey ist fery vicked?"

Mary's face had been a little pale, for her, I thought, as the wagon drew up; but it immediately became scarlet. She even suffered her head to droop a little, and then I perceived that she cast an anxious and tender glance at her father. I cannot say whether this look were or

were not intended for a silent appeal, unconsciously made; but the father, without even seeing it, acted as if he fancied it might be.

"No, no," he said, hurriedly; "this dear girl is doing violence to all her feelings but one, in venturing to such a place. Her filial piety has proved stronger than her fears and her tastes, and when she found that go I would, no argument of mine could persuade her to remain at home. I hope she will not repent it."

The colour did not quit Mary's face, but she looked grateful at finding her true motives appreciated; and she even smiled, though she said nothing. My own feelings underwent another sudden revulsion. There was no want of those tastes and inclinations that can alone render a young woman attractive to any man of sentiment, but there was high moral feeling and natural affection enough to overcome them in a case in which she thought duty demanded the sacrifice. It was very little probable that any thing would or could occur that day to render the presence of Mary Warren in the least necessary or useful; but it was very pleasant to me, and very lovely in her, to think otherwise, under the strong impulses of her filial attachment.

Another idea, however, and one far less pleasant, suggested itself to the minds of my uncle and myself, and almost at the same instant; it was this: the conversation was carried on in a high key, or loud enough to be heard at some little distance, the horse and part of the wagon interposing between the speakers; and there was the physical certainty that some of those whom we knew to be close at hand, in the bushes, must hear all that was said, and might take serious offence at it. Under this apprehension, therefore, my uncle directed me to remove our own vehicle as fast as possible, in order that the clergyman might pass. Mr. Warren, however, was in no hurry to do this, for he was utterly ignorant of the audience he had, and entertained that feeling towards us that men of liberal acquirements are apt to feel when they see others of similar educations reduced by fortune below their proper level. He was, consequently, desirous of manifesting his sympathy with us, and would not proceed, even after I had opened the way for him.

"It is a painful thing," continued Mr. Warren, "to find men mistaking their own cupidity for the workings of a love of liberty. To me nothing is more palpable than that this anti-rent

movement is covetousness incited by the father of evil; yet you will find men among us who fancy they are aiding the cause of free institutions by joining in it, when, in truth, they are doing all they can to bring them into discredit, and to insure their certain downfall, in the end."

This was sufficiently awkward; for, by going near enough to give a warning in a low voice, and have that warning followed by a change in the discourse, we should be betraying ourselves, and might fall into serious danger. At the very moment the clergyman was thus speaking I saw the masked head of Streak o' Lightning appearing through an opening in some small pines that grew a little in the rear of the wagon, a position that enabled him to hear every syllable that was uttered. I was afraid to act myself, and trusted to the greater experience of my uncle. Whether the last also saw the pretended chief was more than I knew, but he decided to let the conversation go on, rather leaning to the anti-rent side of the question, as the course that could do no serious evil, while it might secure our own safety. It is scarcely necessary to say all these considerations glanced through our minds so swiftly as to cause no very awkward or suspicious pause in the discourse.

"B'rhaps dey doosn't like to bay rent?" put in my uncle, with a roughness of manner that was in accordance with the roughness of the sentiment. "Beoples might radder haf deir landts for nuttin', dan bay rents for dem."

"In that case, then, let them go and buy lands for themselves; if they do not wish to pay rent, why did they agree to pay rent?"

"May be dey changes deir minds. Vhat is goot to-day doosn't always seem goot to-morrow."

"That may be true; but we have no right to make others suffer for our own fickleness. I dare say, now, that it might be better for the whole community that so large a tract of land as that included in the Manor of Rensselaerwyck, for instance, and lying as it does in the very heart of the State, should be altogether in the hands of the occupants, than have it subject to the divided interest that actually exists; but it does not follow that a change is to be made by violence, or by fraudulent means. In either of the latter cases the injury done the community would be greater than if the present tenures were to exist a thousand years. I dare say much the larger portion of those farms can be bought off at a moderate advance on their actual money

value; and that is the way to get rid of the difficulty; not by bullying owners out of their property. If the State finds a political consideration of so much importance for getting rid of the tenures, let the State tax itself to do so, and make a liberal offer, in addition to what the tenants will offer, and I'll answer for it the landlords will not stand so much in their own way as to decline good prices."

"But, maybes dey won't sell all der landts; dey may wants to keep some of dem."

"They have a right to say yes or no, while we have no right to juggle or legislate them out of their property. The Legislature of this State has quite lately been exhibiting one of the most pitiable sights the world has seen in my day. It has been struggling for months to find a way to get round the positive provisions of laws and constitutions, in order to make a sacrifice of the rights of a few, to secure the votes of the many."

"Votes ist a goot ding, at election dime—haw, haw, haw!" exclaimed my uncle.

Mr. Warren looked both surprised and offended. The coarseness of manner that my uncle had assumed effected its object with the Injins, but

it almost destroyed the divine's previous good opinion of our characters, and quite upset his notions of our refinement and principles. There was no time for explanations, however; for, just as my uncle's broad and well-acted "haw, haw, haw," was ended, a shrill whistle was heard in the bushes, and some forty or fifty of the Injins came whooping and leaping out from their cover, filling the road in all directions, immediately around the wagons.

Mary Warren uttered a little scream at this startling scene, and I saw her arm clinging to that of her father, by a sort of involuntary movement, as if she would protect him at all hazards. Then she seemed to rally, and from that instant her character assumed an energy, an earnestness, a spirit, and an intrepidity that I had least expected in one so mild in aspect, and so really sweet in disposition.

All this was unnoticed by the Injins. They had their impulses, too, and the first thing they did was to assist Mr. Warren and his daughter to alight from their wagon. This was done, not without decorum of manner, and certainly not without some regard to the holy office of one of the parties, and to the sex of the other.

Nevertheless, it was done neatly and expeditiously, leaving us all, Mr. Warren and Mary, my uncle and myself, with a cluster of some fifty Injins around us, standing in the centre of the highway.

CHAPTER IV.

"No toil in despair,
No tyrant, no slave,
No bread-tax is there,
With a maw like the grave."

ALL this was so suddenly done as scarce to leave us time to think. There was one instant, notwithstanding, while two Injins were assisting Mary Warren to jump from the wagon, when my incognito was in great danger. Perceiving that the young lady was treated with no particular disrespect, I so far overcame the feeling as to remain quiet, though I silently changed my position sufficiently to get near her elbow, where I could and did whisper a word or two of encouragement. But Mary thought only of her father, and had no fears for herself. She saw none but him, trembled only for him, dreaded and hoped for him alone.

As for Mr. Warren himself, he betrayed no discomposure. Had he been about to enter the desk, his manner could not have been more calm. He gazed around him to ascertain if it were possible to recognize any of his captors, but suddenly turned his head away, as if struck with the expediency of not learning their names, even though it had been possible. He might be put on the stand as a witness against some misguided neighbour, did he know his person. All this was so apparent in his benevolent countenance, that I think it struck some among the Injins, and still believe it may have had a little influence on their treatment of him. A pot of tar and a bag of feathers had been brought into the road when the gang poured out of the bushes, but whether this were merely accidental, or it had originally been intended to use them on Mr. Warren, I cannot say. The offensive materials soon and silently disappeared, and with them every sign of any intention to offer personal injury.

"What have I done that I am thus arrested in the public highway, by men armed and disguised, contrary to law?" demanded the divine, as soon as the general pause which succeeded the first movement invited him to speak. "This

is a rash and illegal step, that may yet bring repentance."

"No preachee now," answered Streak o' Lightning; "preachee for meetin', no good for road."

Mr. Warren afterwards admitted to me that he was much relieved by this reply, the substitution of the word "meeting" for "church" giving him the grateful assurance that *this* individual, at least, was not one of his own people.

"Admonition and remonstrance may always be useful when crime is meditated. You are now committing a felony, for which the State's prison is the punishment prescribed by the laws of the land, and the duties of my holy office direct me to warn you of the consequences. The earth itself is but one of God's temples, and his ministers need never hesitate to proclaim his laws on any part of it."

It was evident that the calm severity of the divine, aided, no doubt, by his known character, produced an impression on the gang, for the two who had still hold of his arms released them, and a little circle was now formed, in the centre of which he stood.

"If you will enlarge this circle, my friends,"

continued Mr. Warren, "and give room, I will address you here, where we stand, and let you know my reasons why I think your conduct ought to be——"

"No, no,—no preachee here," suddenly interrupted Streak o' Lightning; "go to village, go to meetin'-'us'—preachee there.—Two preacher, den.—Bring wagon and put him in. March, march; path open."

Although this was but an "Injin" imitation of "Indian" sententiousness, and somewhat of a caricature, everybody understood well enough what was meant. Mr. Warren offered no resistance, but suffered himself to be placed in Miller's wagon, with my uncle at his side, without opposition. Then it was, however, that he bethought himself of his daughter, though his daughter had never ceased to think of him. I had some little difficulty in keeping her from rushing into the crowd, and clinging to his side. Mr. Warren rose, and giving her an encouraging smile, bade her be calm, told her he had nothing to fear, and requested that she would enter his own wagon again and return home, promising to rejoin her as soon as his duties at the village were discharged.

"Here is no one to drive the horse, my child,

but our young German acquaintance. The distance is very short, and if he will thus oblige me, he can come down to the village with the wagon, as soon as he has seen you safe at our own door."

Mary Warren was accustomed to defer to her father's opinions, and she so far submitted, now, as to permit me to assist her into the wagon, and to place myself at her side, whip in hand, proud of and pleased with the precious charge thus committed to my care. These arrangements made, the Injins commenced their march, about half of them preceding, and the remainder following the wagon that contained their prisoner. Four, however, walked on each side of the vehicle, thus preventing the possibility of escape. No noise was made, and little was said; the orders being given by signs and signals rather than by words.

Our wagon continued stationary until the party had got at least a hundred yards from us, no one giving any heed to our movements. I had waited thus long for the double purpose of noting the manner of the proceedings among the Injins, and to obtain room to turn at a spot in the road a short distance in advance of us, and which was wider than common. To this

spot I now walked the horse, and was in the act of turning the animal's head in the required direction, when I saw Mary Warren's little gloved hand laid hurriedly on the reins. She endeavoured to keep the head of the horse in the road.

"No, no," said the charming girl, speaking earnestly, as if she would not be denied, "we will follow my father to the village. I may not, must not, *cannot* quit him!"

The time and place were every way propitious, and I determined to let Mary Warren know who I was. By doing it I might give her confidence in me at a moment when she was in distress, and encourage her with the hope that I might also befriend her father. At any rate, I was determined to pass for an itinerant Dutch music-grinder with *her* no longer.

"Miss Mary, Miss Warren," I commenced cautiously, and with quite as much hesitation and diffidence of feeling as of manner, "I am not what I seem—that is, I am no music-grinder."

The start, the look, and the alarm of my companion, were all eloquent and natural. Her hand was still on the reins, and she now drew on them so hard as actually to stop the horse.

76462

I thought she intended to jump out of the vehicle, as a place no longer fit for her.

"Be not alarmed, Miss Warren," I said, eagerly, and, I trust, so earnestly as to inspire a little confidence. "You will not think the worse of me at finding I am your countryman instead of a foreigner, and a gentleman instead of a music-grinder. I shall do all you ask, and will protect you with my life."

"This is so extraordinary!—so unusual!—The whole country appears unsettled! Pray, sir, if you are not the person whom you have represented yourself to be, who are you?"

"One who admires your filial love and courage—who honours you for them both. I am the brother of your friend, Martha—I am Hugh Littlepage!"

The little hand now abandoned the reins, and the dear girl turned half round on the cushion of the seat, gazing at me in mute astonishment! I had been cursing in my heart the lank locks of the miserable wig I was compelled to wear, ever since I had met with Mary Warren, as unnecessarily deforming and ugly, for one might have as well a becoming as a horridly unbecoming disguise. Off went my cap, therefore, and off went the

wig after it, leaving my own shaggy curls for the sole setting of my face.

Mary made a slight exclamation as she gazed at me, and the deadly paleness of her countenance was succeeded by a slight blush. A smile, too, parted her lips, and I fancied she was less alarmed.

"Am I forgiven, Miss Warren?" I asked, "and will you recognize me for the brother of your friend?"

"Does Martha—does Mrs. Littlepage know of this?" the charming girl at length asked.

"Both; I have had the happiness of being embraced by both my grandmother and my sister. You were taken out of the room yesterday by the first, that I might be left alone with the last, for that very purpose!"

"I see it all now; yes, I thought it singular then, though I felt there could be no impropriety in any of Mrs. Littlepage's acts. Dearest Martha! how well she played her part, and how admirably she has kept your secret!"

"It is very necessary. You see the condition of the country, and will understand that it would be imprudent in me to appear openly, even on my own estate. I have a written covenant authorizing me to visit every farm

near us, to look after my own interests; yet it may be questioned if it would be safe to visit one among them all, now that the spirits of misrule and covetousness are up and doing."

"Replace your disguise at once, Mr. Littlepage," said Mary, eagerly; "do—do not delay an instant."

I did as desired, Mary watching the process with interested, and, at the same time, amused eyes. I thought she looked as sorry as I felt myself when that lank, villainous wig was again performing its office.

"Am I as well arranged as when we first met, Miss Warren? Do I appear again the music-grinder?"

"I see no difference," returned the dear girl, laughing. How musical and cheering to me were the sounds of her voice in that little burst of sweet, feminine merriment. "Indeed, indeed, I do not think even Martha could know you *now*, for the person you the moment before seemed."

"My disguise is, then, perfect. I was in hopes it left a little that my friends might recognize, while it effectually concealed me from my enemies."

"It does—oh! it does. Now I know who

you are, I find no difficulty in tracing in your features the resemblance to your portrait in the family gallery, at the Nest. The eyes, too, cannot be altered without artificial brows, and those you have not."

This was consoling; but all that time Mr. Warren and the party in front had been forgotten. Perhaps it was excusable in two young persons thus situated, and who had now known each other a week, to think more of what was just then passing in the wagon, than to recollect the tribe that was marching down the road, and the errand they were on. I felt the necessity, however, of next consulting my companion as to our future movements. Mary heard me in evident anxiety, and her purpose seemed unsettled, for she changed colour under each new impulse of her feelings.

"If it were not for one thing," she answered, after a thoughtful pause, "I should insist on following my father."

"And what may be the reason of this change of purpose?"

"Would it be altogether safe for *you*, Mr Littlepage, to venture again among those misguided men?"

"Never think of me, Miss Warren. You

see I have been among them already undetected, and it is my intention to join them again, even should I first have to take you home. Decide for yourself."

"I will, then, follow my father. My presence may be the means of saving him from some indignity."

I was rejoiced at this decision, on two accounts; of which one might have been creditable enough to me, while the other, I am sorry to say, was rather selfish. I delighted in the dear girl's devotion to her parent, and I was glad to have her company as long as possible that morning. Without entering into a very close analysis of motives, however, I drove down the road, keeping the horse on a very slow gait, being in no particular hurry to quit my present fair companion.

Mary and I had now a free, and, in some sense, a confidential dialogue. Her manner towards me had entirely changed; for, while it maintained the modesty and *retenue* of her sex and station, it displayed much of that frankness which was the natural consequence of her great intimacy at the Nest, and, as I have since ascertained, of her own ingenuous nature. The circumstance, too, that she now felt she was

with one of her own class, who had opinions, habits, tastes and thoughts like her own, removed a mountain of restraint, and made her communications natural and easy. I was near an hour, I do believe, in driving the two miles that lay between the point where the Injins had been met and the village, and in that hour Mary Warren and I became better acquainted than would have been the case, under ordinary circumstances, in a year.

In the first place, I explained the reasons and manner of my early and unexpected return home, and the motives by which I had been governed in thus coming in disguise on my own property. Then I said a little of my future intentions, and of my disposition to hold out to the last against every attempt on my rights, whether they might come from the open violence and unprincipled designs of those below, or the equally unprincipled schemes of those above. A spurious liberty and political cant were things that I despised, as every intelligent and independent man must; and I did not intend to be persuaded I was an aristocrat, merely because I had the habits of a gentleman, at the very moment when I had less political influence than the hired labourers in my own service.

Mary Warren manifested a spirit and an intelligence that surprised me. She expressed her own belief that the proscribed classes of the country had only to be true to themselves to be restored to their just rights, and that on the very principle by which they were so fast losing them. The opinions she thus expressed are worthy of being recorded.

"Everything that is done in that way," said this gentle, but admirable creature, "has hitherto been done on a principle that is quite as false and vicious as that by which they are now oppressed. We have had a great deal written and said, lately, about uniting people of property, but it has been so evidently with an intention to make money rule, and that in its most vulgar and vicious manner, that persons of right feelings would not unite in such an effort; but it does seem to me, Mr. Littlepage, that if the gentlemen of New York would form themselves into an association in defence of their rights, and for nothing else, and let it be known that they would *not* be robbed with impunity, they are numerous enough and powerful enough to put down this anti-rent project by the mere force of numbers. Thousands would join them for the sake of principles, and the country might be left to the enjoyment

of the fruits of liberty, without getting any of the fruits of its cant.

This is a capital idea, and might easily be carried out. It requires nothing but a little self-denial, with the conviction of the necessity of doing something, if the downward tendency is to be ever checked short of civil war, and a revolution that is to let in despotism in its more direct form; despotism, in the indirect, is fast appearing among us, as it is.

"I have heard of a proposition for the Legislature to appoint special commissioners, who are to settle all the difficulties between the landlords and tenants," I remarked, "a scheme in the result of which some people profess to have a faith. I regard it as only one of the many projects that have been devised to evade the laws and institutions of the country, as they now exist."

Mary Warren seemed thoughtful for a moment; then her eye and face brightened, as if she were struck with some thought suddenly; after which the colour deepened on her cheek, and she turned to me as if half doubting, and yet half desirous of giving utterance to the idea that was uppermost.

"You wish to say something, Miss Warren?"

"I dare say it will be very silly—and I hope you won't think it pedantic in a girl, but really it does look so to me—what difference would there be between such a commission and the Star-Chamber judges of the Stuarts, Mr. Littlepage?"

"Not much in general principles, certainly, as both would be the instruments of tyrants; but a very important one in a great essential. The Star-Chamber courts were legal, whereas this commission would be flagrantly illegal; the adoption of a special tribunal to effect certain purposes that could exist only in the very teeth of the constitution, both in its spirit and its letter. Yet this project comes from men who prate about the 'spirit of the institutions,' which they clearly understand to be their own spirit, let that be what it may."

"Providence, I trust, will not smile on such desperate efforts to do wrong!" said Mary Warren, solemnly.

"One hardly dare look into the inscrutable ways of a Power that has its motives so high beyond our reach. Providence permits much evil to be done, and is very apt to be, as Frederic of Prussia expressed it, on the side of strong battalions, so far as human vision can

penetrate. Of one thing, however, I feel certain, and that is that they who are now the most eager to overturn everything to effect present purposes, will be made to repent of it bitterly, either in their own persons, or in those of their descendants."

"That is what is meant, my father says, by visiting 'the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generations.' But there is the party, with their prisoners, just entering the village. Who is your companion, Mr. Littlepage?—One hired to act as an assistant?"

"It is my uncle himself. You have often heard, I should think, of Mr. Roger Littlepage?"

Mary gave a little exclamation at hearing this, and she almost laughed. After a short pause she blushed brightly, and turned to me as she said—

"And my father and I have supposed you, the one a pedlar, and the other a street-musician!"

"But bedlars and moosic-grinders of goot etications, as might be panishet for deir bolitics."

Now, indeed, she laughed out, for the long and frank dialogue we had held together made

this change to broken English seem as if a third person had joined us. I profited by the occasion to exhort the dear girl to be calm, and not to feel any apprehension on the subject of her father. I pointed out how little probable it was that violence would be offered to a minister of the gospel, and showed her, by the number of persons that had collected in the village, that it was impossible he should not have many warm and devoted friends present. I also gave her permission to, nay, requested she would, tell Mr. Warren the fact of my uncle's and my own presence, and the reasons of our disguises, trusting altogether to the very obvious interest the dear girl took in our safety, that she would add, of her own accord, the necessary warning on the subject of secrecy. Just as this conversation ended we drove into the hamlet, and I helped my fair companion to alight.

Mary Warren now hastened to seek her father, while I was left to take care of the horse. This I did by fastening him to the rails of a fence, that was lined for a long distance by horses and wagons drawn up by the way-side. Surprisingly few persons in the country, at this day, are seen on horseback. Notwithstanding the vast difference in the amount of the popu-

lation, ten horsemen were to be met with forty years ago, by all accounts, on the highways of the State, for one to-day. The well-known vehicle, called a dearborn, with its four light wheels and mere shell of a box, is in such general use as to have superseded almost every other species of conveyance. Coaches and chariots are no longer met with, except in the towns; and even the coachee, the English sociable, which was once so common, has very generally given way to a sort of carriage-wagon, that seems a very general favourite. My grandmother, who did use the stately-looking and elegant chariot in town, had nothing but this carriage-wagon in the country; and I question if one-half of the population of the State would know what to call the former vehicle, if they should see it.

As a matter of course, the collection of people assembled at Little Nest on this occasion had been brought together in dearborns, of which there must have been between two and three hundred lining the fences and crowding the horse-sheds of the two inns. The American countryman, in the true sense of the word, is still quite rustic in many of his notions; though, on the whole, less marked in this particular than

his European counterpart. As the rule, he has yet to learn that the little liberties which are tolerated in a thinly-peopled district, and which are of no great moment when put in practice under such circumstances, become oppressive and offensive when reverted to in places of much resort. The habits of popular control, too, come to aid in making them fancy that what everybody does in their part of the country can have no great harm in it. It was in conformity with this *tendency* of the institutions, perhaps, that very many of the vehicles I have named were thrust into improper places, stopping up the footways, impeding the entrances to doors, here and there letting down bars without permission, and garnishing orchards and pastures with one-horse wagons. Nothing was meant by all these liberties beyond a desire to dispose of the horses and vehicles in the manner easiest to their owners. Nevertheless, there was some connexion between the institutions and these little liberties which some statesmen might fancy existed in the *spirit* of the former. This, however, was a capital mistake, inasmuch as the *spirit* of the institutions is to be found in the laws, which prohibit and punish all sorts of trespasses, and which are enacted expressly to

curb the *tendencies* of human nature! No, no, as my uncle Ro says, nothing can be less alike, sometimes, than the *spirit* of institutions and their *tendencies*.

I was surprised to find nearly as many females as men had collected at the Little Nest on this occasion. As for the Injins, after escorting Mr. Warren as far as the village, as if significantly to admonish him of their presence, they had quietly released him, permitting him to go where he pleased. Mary had no difficulty in finding him, and I saw her at his side, apparently in conversation with Opportunity and her brother, Seneca, as soon as I moved down the road, after securing the horse. The Injins themselves kept a little aloof, having my uncle in their very centre; not as a prisoner, for it was clear no one suspected his character, but as a pedlar. The watches were out again, and near half of the whole gang seemed busy in trading, though I thought that some among them were anxious and distrustful.

It was a singular spectacle to see men who were raising the cry of "aristocracy" against those who happened to be richer than themselves, while they did not possess a single privilege or power that, substantially, was not equally

shared by every other man in the country, thus openly arrayed in defiance of law, and thus violently trampling the law under their feet. What made the spectacle more painful was the certainty that was obtained by their very actions on the ground, that no small portion of these Injins were mere boys, led on by artful and knavish men, and who considered the whole thing as a joke. When the laws fall so much into disrepute as to be the subject of jokes of this sort, it is time to inquire into their mode of administration. Does any one believe that fifty landlords could have thus flown into the face of a recent enactment, and committed felony openly, and under circumstances that had rendered their intentions no secret, for a time long enough to enable the authorities to collect a force sufficient to repress them? My own opinion is, that had Mr. Stephen Rensselaer, and Mr. William Rensselaer, and Mr. Harry Livingston, and Mr. John Hunter, and Mr. Daniel Livingston, and Mr. Hugh Littlepage, and fifty more that I could name, been caught armed and disguised, in order to *defend* the rights of property that are solemnly guaranteed in these institutions, of which it would seem to be the notion of some that it is the "spirit" to dispossess them, we should all of

us have been the inmates of States' prisons, without legislators troubling themselves to pass laws for our liberation! This is another of the extraordinary features of American aristocracy, which almost deprives the noble of the every-day use and benefit of the law. It would be worth our while to lose a moment in inquiring into the process by which such strange results are brought about, but it is fortunately rendered unnecessary by the circumstance that the principle will be amply developed in the course of the narrative.

A stranger could hardly have felt the real character of this meeting by noting the air and manner of those who had come to attend it. The "armed and disguised" kept themselves in a body, it is true, and maintained, in a slight degree, the appearance of distinctness from "the people," but many of the latter stopped to speak to these men, and were apparently on good terms with them. Not a few of the gentler sex, even, appeared to have acquaintances in the gang; and it would have struck a political philosopher from the other hemisphere with some surprise, to have seen the "people" thus tolerating fellows who were openly trampling on a law that the "people" themselves had just enacted! A political philosopher from

among ourselves, however, might have explained the seeming contradiction by referring it to the "spirit of the institutions." If one were to ask Hugh Littlepage to solve the difficulty, he would have been very apt to answer that the "people" of Ravensnest wanted to compel him to sell lands which he did not wish to sell, and that not a few of them were anxious to add to the compulsory bargains conditions as to price that would rob him of about one-half of his estate; and that what the Albany philosophers called the "spirit of the institutions," was, in fact, a "spirit of the devil," which the institutions were expressly designed to hold in subjection!

There was a good deal of out-door management going on, as might be seen by the private discussions that were held between pairs, under what is called the "horse-shedding" process. —This "horse-shedding" process, I understand, is well known among us, and extends not only to politics, but to the administration of justice. Your regular "horse-shedder" is employed to frequent taverns where jurors stay, and drops hints before them touching the merits of causes known to be on the calendars; possibly contrives to get into a room with six or eight beds, in which there may accidentally be a juror, or even two, in a bed, when he drops

into a natural conversation on the merits of some matter at issue, praises one of the parties, while he drops dark hints to the prejudice of the other, and makes his own representations of the facts in a way to scatter the seed where he is morally certain it will take root and grow. All this time he is not conversing with a juror, not he; he is only assuming the office of the judge by anticipation, and dissecting evidence before it has been given, in the ear of a particular friend. It is true there is a law against doing anything of the sort; it is true there is a law to punish the editor of a newspaper who shall publish anything to prejudice the interests of litigants; it is true the "horse-shedding process" is flagrantly wicked, and intended to destroy most of the benefits of the jury-system; but, notwithstanding all this, the "spirit of the institutions" carries everything before it, and men regard all these laws and provisions, as well as the eternal principles of right, precisely as if they had no existence at all, or as if a freeman were above the law. He makes the law, and why should he not break it? Here is another effect of the "spirit of the institutions."

At length the bell rang, and the crowd began to move towards the "meetin'-us." This build-

ing was not that which had been originally constructed, and at the raising of which, I have heard it said, my dear old grandmother, then a lovely and spirited girl of nineteen, had been conspicuous for her coolness and judgment, but a far more pretending successor. The old building had been constructed on the true model of the highest dissenting spirit—a spirit that induced its advocates to quarrel with good taste as well as religious dogmas, in order to make the chasm as wide as possible—while in this, some concessions had been made to the temper of the times. I very well remember the old "meetin'-us" at the "Little Nest," for it was pulled down to give place to its more pretending successor after I had attained my sixteenth year. A description of both may let the reader into the secret of our rural church architecture.

The "old Neest meetin' us," like its successor, was of a hemlock frame, covered with pine clap-boards, and painted white. Of late years, the paint had been of a most fleeting quality, the oil seeming to evaporate, instead of striking in and setting, leaving the colouring matter in a somewhat decomposed condition, to rub off by friction and wash away in the rains. The house was a stiff, formal parallelogram,

resembling a man with high shoulders, appearing to be "stuck up." It had two rows of formal, short and ungraceful windows, *that* being a point in orthodoxy at the period of its erection. It had a tower, uncouth, and in some respects too large and others too small, if one can reconcile the contradiction: but there are anomalies of this sort in art, as in nature. On the top of this tower stood a long-legged belfry, which had got a very dangerous, though a very common, propensity in ecclesiastical matters; in other words, it had begun to "cant." It was this diversion from the perpendicular which had suggested the necessity of erecting a new edifice, and the building in which the "lecture" on feudal tenures and aristocracy was now to be delivered.

The new meeting-house at Little Nest was a much more pretending edifice than its predecessor. It was also of wood, but a bold diverging from "first principles" had been ventured on, not only in physical, but in the moral church. The last was "new-school;" as, indeed, was the first. What "new-school" means, in a spiritual sense, I do not exactly know, but I suppose it to be some improvement on some other improvement of the more ancient

and venerable dogmas of the sect to which it belongs. These improvements on improvements are rather common among us, and are favourably viewed by a great number under the name of progress; though he who stands at a little distance can, half the time, discover that the parties in progress very often come out at the precise spot from which they started.

For my part, I find so much wisdom in the Bible—so profound a knowledge of human nature, and of its tendencies—counsel so comprehensive and so safe, and this solely in reference to the things of this life, that I do not believe everything is progress in the right direction because it sets us in motion on paths that are not two thousand years old! I believe that we have quite as much that ought to be kept, as of that which ought to be thrown away; and while I admit the vast number of abuses that have grown up in the old world, under the "spirit of *their* institutions," as our philosophers would say, I can see a goodly number that are also growing up here, certainly not under the same "spirit," unless we refer them both, as a truly wise man would, to our common and miserable nature.

The main departure from first principles, in

the sense of material things, was in the fact that the new meeting-house had only *one* row of windows, and that the windows of that row had the pointed arch. The time has been when this circumstance would have created a schism in the theological world; and I hope that my youth and inexperience will be pardoned, if I respectfully suggest that a pointed arch, or any other arch in *wood*, ought to create another in the world of taste.

But in we went, men, women, and children; uncle Ro, Mr. Warren, Mary, Seneca, Opportunity, and all, the Injins excepted. For some reason connected with their policy, those savages remained outside, until the whole audience had assembled in grave silence. The orator was in, or on a sort of stage, which was made, under the new-light system in architecture, to supersede the old, inconvenient, and ugly pulpit, supported on each side by two divines, of what denomination I shall not take on myself to say. It will be sufficient if I add Mr. Warren was not one of them. He and Mary had taken their seats quite near the door, and under the gallery. I saw that the rector was uneasy the moment the lecturer and his two supporters entered the pulpit, and appeared on the stage;

and at length he arose, and followed by Mary, he suddenly left the building. In an instant I was at their side, for it struck me indisposition was the cause of so strange a movement. Fortunately, at this moment, the whole audience rose in a body, and one of the ministers commenced an extempore prayer.

At that instant the Injins had drawn themselves up around the building, close to its sides, and under the open windows, in a position that enabled them to hear all that passed. As I afterwards learned, this arrangement was made with an understanding with those within, one of the ministers having positively refused to address the throne of Grace so long as any of the tribe were present. Well has it been said, that man often strains at a gnat, and swallows a camel!

CHAPTER V.

"I tell thee, Jack Cade, the clothier means to dress the commonwealth, and turn it, and put a new nap upon it."

KING HENRY VI.

As I knew Mary must have communicated to her father my real name, I did not hesitate, as I ought to have done in my actual dress and in my assumed character, about following them, in order to inquire if I could be of any service I never saw distress more strongly painted in any man's countenance than it was in that of Mr. Warren, when I approached. So very obvious, indeed, was his emotion, that I did not venture to obtrude myself on him, but followed in silence; and he and Mary slowly walked, side by side, across the street to the stoop of a house, of which all the usual inmates had probably gone in the other direction. Here, Mr.

Warren took a seat, Mary still at his side, while I drew near, standing before him.

"I thank you, Mr. Littlepage," the divine at length said, with a smile so painful it was almost haggard, "for, so Mary tells me you should be called—I thank you for this attention, sir—but, it will be over in another minute—I feel better now, and shall be able to command myself."

No more was then said, concerning the reason of this distress; but Mary has since explained to me its cause. When her father went into the meeting-house, he had not the smallest idea that anything like a religious service would be dragged into the ceremonies of such a day. The two ministers on the stage first gave him the alarm; when a most painful struggle occurred in his mind, whether or not he should remain, and be a party to the mockery of addressing God in prayer, in an assembly collected to set at naught one of the plainest of his laws—nay, with banded felons drawn up around the building, as principal actors in the whole mummery. The alternative was for him, a minister of the altar, to seem to quit those who were about to join in prayer, and to do this moreover under circumstances which might appear to others as if he rejected all worship but that which was in

accordance with his own views of right, a notion that would be certain to spread far and near, greatly to the prejudice of his own people. But the first, as he viewed the matter, involved a species of blasphemy; and yielding to his feelings, he took the decided step he had, intending to remain out of the building, until the more regular business of the day commenced.

It is certain Mr. Warren, who acted under the best impulse of Christian feeling, a reverence for God, and a profound wish not to be a party in offending him with the mockery of worship under such circumstances, has lost much influence, and made many enemies, by the step he then took. The very same feeling which has raised the cry of aristocracy against every gentleman who dwells in sufficiently near contact with the masses to distinguish his habits from those around him; which induces the eastern emigrant, who comes from a state of society where there are no landlords, to fancy those he finds here ought to be pulled down, because he is not a landlord himself; which enables the legislator to stand up in his place, and unblushingly talk about feudal usages, at the very instant he is demonstrating that equal rights are denied to those he would fain stigmatize as

feudal lords, has extended to religion, and the church of which Mr. Warren was a minister is very generally accused of being aristocratic, too! This charge is brought because it has claims which other churches affect to renounce and reject as forming no part of the faith; but the last cannot remain easy under their own decisions; and while they shout, and sing that they have found "a church without a bishop," they hate the church that has a bishop, because it has something they do not possess themselves, instead of pitying its deluded members, if they believe them wrong. This will not be admitted generally, but it is nevertheless true; and betrays itself in a hundred ways. It is seen in the attempt to *call* their own priests bishops, in the feeling so manifest whenever a cry can be raised against their existence, and in the *general* character of these theological rallies, whenever they do occur.

For one, I see a close analogy between my own church, as it exists in this country, and comparing it with that from which it sprung, and to those which surround it, and the true political circumstances of the two hemispheres. In discarding a vast amount of surplusage, in reducing the orders of the ministry

in practice, as well as in theory, to the primitive number, three, and in rejecting all connexion with the state, the American branch of the Episcopal Church has assumed the position it was desirous to fill; restoring, as near as may be, the simplicity of the apostolical ages, while it does not disregard the precepts and practices of the apostles themselves. It has not set itself above antiquity and authority, but merely endeavoured to sustain them, without the encumbrances of more modern abuses. Thus, too, has it been in political things. No attempt has been made to create new organic social distinctions in this country, but solely to disencumber those that are inseparable from the existence of all civilized society, of the clumsy machinery with which the expedients of military oppressors had invested them. The real sages of this country, in founding its institutions, no more thought of getting rid of the landlords of the country, than the church thought of getting rid of its bishops. The first knew that the gradations of property were an inevitable incident of civilization; that it would not be wise, if it were possible, to prevent the affluent from making large investments in the soil; and that this could not be done in practice, without leaving

the relation of landlord and tenant. Because landlords, in other parts of the world, possessed privileges that were not necessary to the natural or simple existence of the character, was no reason for destroying the character itself; any more than the fact that the bishops of England possess an authority the apostles knew nothing of, rendered it proper for the American branch of the church to do away with an office that came from the apostles. But, envy and jealousy do not pause to reflect on such things; it is enough for *them*, in the one case, that you and yours have estates, and occupy social positions, that I and mine do not, and cannot easily, occupy and possess; *therefore* I will oppose you, and join my voice to the cry of those who wish to get their farms for nothing; and in the other, that you have bishops when we can have none, without abandoning our present organization and doctrines.

I dwell on these points at some little length, because the movements of Mr. Warren and myself, at that moment, had a direct influence on the circumstances that will soon be related. It is probable that fully one-half of those collected in the Little Nest meeting-house, tha morning, as they stood up, and lent a sort of

one-sided and listless attention to the prayer, were thinking of the scandalous and aristocratical conduct of Mr. Warren, in "goin' out o' meetin' just as meetin' went to prayers!" Few, indeed, were they who would be likely to ascribe any charitable motive for the act; and probably not one of those present thought of the true and conscientious feeling that had induced it. So the world wags! It is certain that a malignant and bitter feeling was got up against the worthy rector on that occasion, and for that act, which has not yet abated, and which will not abate in many hundreds, until the near approach of death shall lay bare to them the true character of so many of their own feelings.

It was some minutes before Mr. Warren entirely regained his composure. At length he spoke to me, in his usual benevolent and mild way, saying a few words that were complimentary, on the subject of my return, while he expressed his fears that my uncle Ro and myself had been imprudent in thus placing ourselves, as it might be, in the lion's jaws.

"You have certainly made your disguises so complete," he added, smiling, "as to have escaped wonderfully well so far. That you should de-

ceive Mary and myself is no great matter, since neither of us ever saw you before; but, the manner in which your nearest relatives have been misled, is surprising. Nevertheless, you have every inducement to be cautious, for hatred and jealousy have a penetration that does not belong even to love."

"We think we are safe, sir," I answered, "for we are certainly within the statute. We are too well aware of our miserable aristocratical condition to place ourselves within the grasp of the law, for such are our eminent privileges as a landed nobility, that we are morally certain either of us would not only be sent to the State's prison were he to be guilty of the felony those Injins are committing, and will commit, with perfect impunity, but that he would be kept there, as long as a single tear of anguish could be wrung from one of those who are classed with the aristocracy. Democracy alone finds any sympathy in the ordinary administration of American justice."

"I am afraid that your irony has only too much truth in it. But the movement around the building would seem to say that the real business of the day is about to commence, and we had better return to the church."

"These men in disguise are watching us, in a most unpleasant and alarming manner," said Mary Warren, delighting me far more by the vigilance she thus manifested in my behalf, than alarming me by the fact.

That we were watched, however, became obviously apparent, as we walked towards the building, by the actions of some of the Injins. They had left the side of the church where they had posted themselves during the prayer, and head was going to head, among those nearest to us; or, it would be nearer to appearances, were I to say bunch of calico was going to bunch of calico, for nothing in the form of a head was visible among them. Nothing was said to Mr. Warren and Mary, however, who were permitted to go into the meeting-house, unmolested; but two of these disguised gentry placed themselves before me, laying their rifles across my path, and completely intercepting my advance.

"Who you?" abruptly demanded one of the two;—"where go—where come from?".

The answer was ready, and I trust it was sufficiently steady.

"I coomes from Charmany, and I goes into

der kerch, as dey say in mine coontry; what might be callet meetin'-'us, here."

What might have followed it is not easy to say, had not the loud, declamatory voice of the lecturer just then been heard, as he commenced his address. This appeared to be a signal for the tribe to make some movement, for the two fellows who had stopped me, walked silently away, though bag of calico went to bag of calico, as they trotted off together, seemingly communicating to each other their suspicions. I took advantage of the opening, and passed into the church, where I worked my way through the throng, and got a seat at my uncle's side.

I have neither time, room, nor inclination to give anything like an analysis of the lecture. The speaker was fluent, inflated, and anything but logical. Not only did he contradict himself, but he contradicted the laws of nature. The intelligent reader will not require to be reminded of the general character of a speech that was addressed to the passions and interests of such an audience, rather than to their reason. He commented, at first, on the particular covenants of the leases on the old estates of the

colony, alluding to the quarter-sales, chickens, days' work, and durable tenures, in the customary way. The reservation of the mines, too, was mentioned as a tyrannical covenant, precisely as if a landlord were obliged to convey any more of the rights that were vested in him, than he saw fit; or the tenant could justly claim more than he had hired! This man treated all these branches of the subject, as if the tenants had acquired certain mysterious interests by time and occupation, overlooking the fact that the one party got just as good a title as the other by this process; the lease being the instrument between them, that was getting to be venerable. If one party grew old as a tenant, so did the other as a landlord. I thought that this lecturer would have been glad to confine himself to the Manor leases, that being the particular branch of the subject he had been accustomed to treat; but such was not the precise nature of the job he was now employed to execute. At Ravensnest he could not flourish the feudal grievance of the quarter-sales, the "four fat fowls," the "days' works," and the *length* of the leases. Here it was clearly his cue to say nothing of the three first, and to complain of the *shortness* of the leases, as mine

were about to fall in, in considerable numbers. Finding it was necessary to take new ground, he determined it should be bold ground, and such as would give him the least trouble to get along with.

As soon as the lecturer had got through with his general heads, and felt the necessity of coming down to particulars, he opened upon the family of Littlepage, in a very declamatory way. What had they ever done for the country, he demanded, that *they* should be lords in the land? By some process known to himself, he had converted landlords into lords in the land, and was now aiming to make the tenants occupy the latter station—nay, both stations. Of course, some services of a public character, of which the Littlepages might boast, were not touched upon at all, everything of that nature being compressed into what the lecturer and his audience deemed serving the people, by helping to indulge them in all their desires, however rapacious or wicked. As everybody who knows anything of the actual state of matters among us, must be aware how rarely the "people" hear the truth, when their own power and interests are in question, it is not surprising that a very shallow reasoner was enabled to

draw wool over the eyes of the audience of Ravensnest on that particular subject.

But my interest was most awakened when this man came to speak of myself. It is not often that a man enjoys the same opportunity as that I then possessed to hear his own character delineated, and his most private motives analysed. In the first place, the audience were told that this "young Hugh Littlepage had never done anything for the land that he proudly, and like a great European noble, he calls his 'estate.' Most of you, fellow-citizens, can show your hard hands, and recall the burning suns under which you have opened the swarth, through those then lovely meadows yonder, as *your* titles to these farms. But, Hugh Littlepage never did a day's work in his life"—ten minutes before he had been complaining of the "days' work" in the Manor leases as indignities that a freeman ought not to submit to—"no, fellow-citizens, he never had that honour, and never will have it, until by a just division of his property, or what he now *calls* his property, you reduce him to the necessity of labouring to raise the crops he wants to consume."

"Where is this Hugh Littlepage at this

very moment? In Paris, squandering *your* hard earnings in riotous living, according to the best standards of aristocracy. He lives in the midst of abundance, dresses richly and fares richly, while *you* and *yours* are eating the sweat of your brows. He is no man for a pewter spoon and two-pronged fork! No, my countrymen! He must have a *gold* spoon for some of his dishes, and you will find it hard to believe—plain, unpretending, republican farmers as you are, but it is not the less true—he must have forks of *silver!* Fellow-citizens, Hugh Littlepage would not put his knife into his mouth, as you and I do, in eating—as all plain, unpretending republicans do—for the world. It would choke him; no, he keeps *silver* forks to touch his anointed lips!" Here there was an attempt to get up something like applause, but it totally failed. The men of Ravensnest had been accustomed all their lives to see the Littlepages in the social station they occupied; and, after all, it did not seem so very extraordinary that we should have silver forks, any more than that others should have silver spoons. The lecturer had the tact to see that he had failed on this point, and he turned to another.

The next onset was made against our title.

Whence did it come? demanded the lecturer. From the king of England; and the people had conquered the country from that sovereign, and put themselves in his place. Now, is it not a good principle in politics, that to the victors belong the spoils? He believed it was; and that in conquering America, he was of opinion that the people of America had conquered the land, and that they had a right to take the land, and to keep it. Titles from kings he did not respect much; and he believed the American people, generally, did not think much of them. If Hugh Littlepage wished an "estate," as he called it, let him come to the people and "sarve *them*," and see what sort of an estate *they* would give him.

But there was one portion of his speech which was so remarkable, that I must attempt to give it, as it was uttered. It was while the lecturer was expatiating on this subject of titles, that he broke out in the following language:—"Don't talk to me," he bellowed—for by this time his voice had risen to the pitch of a methodist's, in a camp-meeting—"Don't talk to me of antiquity, and time, and length of possession, as things to be respected. They're nawthin'—jest nawthin' at all. Possession 's

good in law, I'll admit; and I contind that's jest what the tenants has. They've got the lawful possession of this very property, that layeth (not eggs, but) up and down, far and near, and all around; a rich and goodly heritage, when divided up among hard-working and honest folks; but too much, by tens of thousands of acres, for a young chap, who is wasting his substance in foreign lands, to hold. I contind that the tenants has this very, precise, lawful, possession, at this blessed moment, only the law won't let 'em enj'y it. It's all owing to that accursed law, that the tenant can't set up a title ag'in his landlord. You see by this one fact, fellow-citizens, that they are a privileged class, and ought to be brought down to the level of gin'ral humanity. You can set up title agi'n anybody else, but you shan't set up title ag'in a landlord. I know what is said in the primisis," shaking his head, in derision of any arguments on the other side of this particular point; "I know that circumstances alter cases. I can see the hardship of one neighbour's coming to another, and asking to borrow or hire his horse for a day, and then pretendin' to hold him on some other ketch. But horses isn't land; you must all allow *that*. No, if horses

was land, the case would be altered. Land is an element, and so is fire, and so is water, and so is air. Now, who will say that a freeman hasn't a right to air, hasn't a right to water, and, on the same process, hasn't a right to land? He *has*, fellow-citizens—he *has*. These are what are called in philosophy elementary rights; which is the same thing as a right to the elements, of which land is one, and a principal one. I say a principal one; for, if there was no land to stand on, we should drop away from air, and couldn't enj'y *that;* we should lose all our water in vapour, and couldn't put it to millin' and manafacterin' purposes; and where could we build our fires? No; land is the *first* elementary right, and connected with it comes the first and most sacred right to the elements.

"I do not altogether disregard antiquity, neither. No; I respect and revere pre-emption rights; for they fortify and sustain the right to the elements. Now, I do not condemn squattin', as some doos. It's actin' accordin' to natur', and natur' is right. I respect and venerate a squatter's possession; for it's held under the sacred principle of usefulness. It says, 'go and make the wilderness blossom as the rose,' and means 'progress.' That's an antiquity I respect. I

respect the antiquity of your possessions here, *as tenants;* for it is a hard-working and useful antiquity—an antiquity that increases and multiplies. If it be said that Hugh Littlepage's ancestors—your noble has his 'ancestors,' while us 'common folks' are satisfied with forefathers"—[this hit took with a great many present, raising a very general laugh]—"but if this Hugh's ancestors did pay any thing for the land, if I was you, fellow-citizens, I'd be gin'rous, and let him have it back ag'in. Perhaps his forefathers gave a cent an acre to the king—may be, two; or say sixpence, if you will. I'd let him have his sixpence an acre back again, by way of shutting his mouth. No; I'm for nawthin' that's ungin'rous."

"Fellow-citizens, I profess to be what is called a Democrat. I know that many of you be what is called Whigs—but I apprehend there isn't much difference between us on the subject of this system of leasing land. We are all republicans, and leasing farms is anti-republican. Then, I wish to be liberal even to them I commonly oppose at elections, and I will freely admit, then, on the whull, the Whigs have rather outdone us Democrats, on the subject of this anti-rentism. I am sorry to be obliged to own in it, but it must

be confessed that, while in the way of governors, there hasn't been much difference—yes, put 'em in a bag, and shake 'em up, and you'd hardly know which would come out first—which has done himself the most immortal honour, which has shown himself the most comprehensive, profound, and safe statesman; I know that some of our people complain of the governors for ordering out troops ag'in the Injins, but they could not *help* that—they wouldn't have done it, in my judgment, had there been any way of getting round it; but the law was too strong for them, so they druv' in the Injins, and now they join us in putting down aristocracy, and in raising up gin'ral humanity. No; I don't go ag'in the governors, though many doos."

"But I profess to be a Democrat, and I'll give an outline of my principles, that all may see why they can't, and don't, and never will agree with aristocracy or nobility, in any form or shape. I believe one man is as good as another in all things. Neither birth, nor law, nor edication, nor riches, nor poverty, nor any thing else, can ever make any difference in this principle, which is sacred, and fundamental, and is the chief stone of the corner in true Democracy. One man is as good as another, I say; and has

just the same right to the enj'yment of 'arth and its privileges, as any other man. I think the majority ought to rule in all things, and that it is the duty of the minority to submit. Now, I've had this here sentiment thrown back upon me, in some places where I have spoken, and been asked, 'How is this—the majority must rule, and the minority must submit—in that case, the minority isn't as good as the majority in practice, and hasn't the same right. They are made to own what they think ought not to be done?' The answer to this is so plain, I wonder a sensible man can ask the question; for all the minority has to do is to join the majority, to have things as they want 'em. The road is free, and it is this open road that makes true liberty. Any man can fall in with the majority, and sensible folks commonly do, when they can find it, and that makes a person not only a man, as the saying is, but a FREEMAN, a still more honourable title."

"Fellow-citizens, a great movement is in progress, 'Go ahead!' is the cry, and the march is onward; our thoughts already fly about on the wings of the lightning, and our bodies move but little slower, on the vapour of steam—soon our principles will rush ahead of all, and let in

the radiance of a glorious day of universal reform, and loveliness, and virtue and charity, when the odious sound of *rent* will never be heard, when every man will set down under his own apple, or cherry tree, if not under his own fig tree.

"I am a Democrat, — yes, a Democrat. Glorious appellation! I delight in it! it is my pride, my boast, my very virtue. Let but the people truly rule, and all must come well. The people has no temptation to do wrong. If they hurt the state, they hurt themselves, for they are the state. Is a man likely to hurt himself? Equality is my axiom. Nor, by equality, do I mean your narrow, pitiful equality before the law, as it is sometimes tarmed, for that may be no equality at all; but, I mean an equality that is substantial, and which must be restored, when the working of the law has de*ranged* it. Fellow-citizens, do you know what leap-year means? I dare say some of you don't, the ladies in partic'lar not giving much attention to astronomy. Well, I have inquired, and it is this:—The 'arth revolves around the sun in a year, as we all know. And we count three hundred and sixty-five days in a year, we all know. But, the 'arth is a few

hours longer than three hundred and sixty-five days, in making its circuit—nearly six hours longer. Now, every body knows that four times six makes twenty-four, and so a twenty-ninth day is put into February every fourth year, to restore the lost time; another change being to be made a long distance ahead to settle the fractions. Thus will it be with Democracy. Human natur' can't devise laws yet, that will keep all things on an exactly equal footing, and political leap-years must be introduced into the political calendar, to restore the equilibrium. In astronomy, we must divide up anew the hours and minutes; in humanity, we must from time to time, divide up the land."

But I cannot follow this inflated fool any longer; for he was quite as much of fool as of knave, though partaking largely of the latter character. It was plain that he carried many of his notions much farther than a good portion of his audience carried theirs; though, whenever he touched upon anti-rentism, he hit a chord that vibrated through the whole assembly. That the tenants ought to own their farms, and pay no more rents, AND POCKET ALL THE BENEFITS OF THEIR OWN PREVIOUS LABOURS, THOUGH THESE LABOURS HAD BEEN CONSIDERED, IN THE

EARLIER RENTS, AND WERE, INDEED, STILL CONSIDERED IN THE LOW RATES AT WHICH THE LANDS WERE LET, was a doctrine all could understand; and few were they, I am sorry to say, who did not betray how much self-love and self-interest had obscured the sense of right.

The lecture, such as it was, lasted more than two hours; and when it was done, an individual rose, in the character of chairman—when did three Americans ever get together to discuss anything, that they had not a chairman and secretary, and all the parliamentary forms?—and invited any one present, who might entertain views different from the speaker, to give his opinion. Never before did I feel so tempted to speak in public. My first impulse was to throw away the wig, and come out in my own person, and expose the shallow trash that had just been uttered. I believe even I, unaccustomed as I was to public speaking, could easily have done this, and I whispered as much to my uncle, who was actually on his feet to perform the office for me, when the sound of "Mr. Chairman," from a different part of the church anticipated him. Looking round, I recognised at once the face of the intelligent mechanic,

named Hall, whom we had met at Mooseridge, on our way to the Nest. I took my seat, at once, perfectly satisfied that the subject was in good hands.

This speaker commenced with great moderation, both of manner and tone, and, indeed, he preserved them throughout. His utterance, accent and language, of course, were all tinctured by his habits and associations; but his good sense and his good principles were equally gifts from above. More of the "true image of his Maker" was to be found in that one individual than existed in fifty common men. He saw clearly, spoke clearly, and demonstrated effectively. As he was well known in that vicinity and generally respected, he was listened to with profound attention, and spoke like a man who stood in no dread of tar and feathers. Had the same sentiments been delivered by one in a fine coat, and a stranger, or even by myself, who had so much at stake, very many of them would have been incontinently set down as aristocratic, and not to be tolerated, the most sublimated lover of equality occasionally falling into these little contradictions.

Hall commenced by reminding the audience that they all knew him, and knew he was no

landlord. He was a mechanic, and a labouring man, like most of themselves, and had no interest that could be separate from the general good of society. This opening was a little homage to prejudice, since reason is reason, and right right, let them come whence they will. "I, too, am a democrat," he went on to say, "but I do not understand democracy to mean anything like that which has been described by the last speaker. I tell that gentleman plainly, that if he is a democrat, I am none; and if I am a democrat, he is none. By democracy I understand a government in which the sovereign power resides in the body of the nation; and not in a few, or in one. But this principle no more gives the body of the people authority to act wrong, than in a monarchy, in which the sovereign power resides in one man, that one man has a right to act wrong. By equality, I do not understand anything more than equality before the law — now, if the law had said that when the late Malbone Littlepage died, his farms should go, not to his next of kin, or to his devisee, but to his neighbours, then that would have been the law to be obeyed, although it would be a law destructive of civilization, since men would never accumulate property to go to

the public. Something nearer home is necessary to make men work, and deny themselves what they like.

"The gentleman has told us of a sort of political leap-year that is to regulate the social calendar. I understand him to mean that when property has got to be unequal, it must be divided up, in order that men may make a new start. I fear he will have to dispense with leap-years, and come to leap months, or leap weeks, ay, or even to leap days; for, was the property of this township divided up this very morning, and in this meetin'-us, it would get to be unequal before night. Some folks can't keep money when they have it; and others can't keep their hands off it.

"Then, again, if Hugh Littlepage's property is to be divided, the property of all of Hugh Littlepage's neighbours ought to be divided too, to make even an *appearance* of equality; though it would be but an *appearance* of equality, admitting that were done, since Hugh Littlepage has more than all the rest of the town put together. Yes, fellow-citizens, Hugh Littlepage pays, at this moment, one-twentieth of the taxes of this whole county. That is about the proportion of Ravensnest; and that tax, in

reality, comes out of his pockets, as much the greater part of the taxes of Rensselaer and Albany counties, if you will except the cities they contain, are paid by the Rensselaers. It wun't do to tell me the tenants pay the taxes, for I know better. We all know that the probable amount of the taxes is estimated in the original bargain, and is so much deducted from the rent, and comes out of the landlord if it come out of anybody. There is a good reason why the tenant should pay it, and a reason that is altogether in his interest; because the law would make his oxen, and horses, and carts liable for the taxes, should the landlord neglect to pay the taxes. The collector always sells personals for a tax, if he can find them on the property; and by deducting it from the rent, and paying it himself, the tenant makes himself secure against that loss. To say that a tenant don't take any account of the taxes he will be likely to pay, in making his bargain, is as if one should say he is *non com.* and not fit to be trusted with his own affairs. There are men, in this community, I am sorry to say, who wish a law passed to tax the rents on durable leases, or on all leases, in order to choke the landlords off from their claims, but such men

are true friends to neither justice nor their country. Such a law would be a tax on the incomes of a particular class of society, and on no other. It is a law that would justify the aggrieved parties in taking up arms to resist it, unless the law would give 'em relief, as I rather think it would. By removing into another State, however, they would escape the tax completely, laugh at those who framed it, who would incur the odium of doing an impotent wrong, and get laughed at as well as despised, besides injuring the State by drawing away its money to be spent out of its limits. Think, for one moment, of the impression that would be made of New York justice, if a hundred citizens of note and standing were to be found living in Philadelphia or Paris, and circulating to the world the report that they were exiles to escape a special taxation! The more the matter was inquired into, the worse it must appear; for men may say what they please, to be ready ag'in election time, as there is but one piece, or parcel of property to tax, it is an income tax, and nothing else. What makes the matter still worse is, that every man of sense will know that it is taxing the same person twice, substantially for the same thing, since the landlord has the direct

land tax deducted from the rent in the original bargain.

"As for all this cry about aristocracy, I don't understand it. Hugh Littlepage has just as good a right to his ways as I have to mine. The gentleman says he needs gold spoons and silver forks to eat with. Well, what of that? I dare say the gentleman himself finds a steel knife and fork useful, and has no objection to a silver, or, at least, to a pewter spoon. Now, there are folks that use wooden forks, or no forks, and who are glad to get horn spoons; and *they* might call that gentleman himself an aristocrat. This setting of ourselves up as the standard in all things is any thing but liberty. If I don't like to eat my dinner with a man who uses a silver fork, no man in this country can compel me. On the other hand, if young Mr. Littlepage don't like a companion who chews tobacco, as I do, he ought to be left to follow his own inclination.

"Then, this doctrine that one man's as good as another has got two sides to it. One man ought to have the same general rights as another, I am ready to allow; but if one man is as *good* as another, why do we have the trouble and cost of elections? We might draw lots, as

we do for jurors, and save a good deal of time and money. We all know there is ch'ice in men, and I think that so long as the people have their ch'ice in savin' who shall and who shall not be their agents, they've got all they have any right to. So long as this is done, the rest of the world may be left to follow their own ways, provided they obey the laws.

"Then, I am no great admirer of them that are always telling the people they're parfect. I know this county pretty well, as well as most in it; and if there be a parfect man in Washington county, I have not yet fallen in with him. Ten millions of imparfect men won't make one parfect man, and so I don't look for perfection in the people any more than I do in princes. All I look for in democracy is to keep the reins in so many hands as to prevent a few from turning everything to their own account; still, we mustn't forget that, when a great many do go wrong, it is much worse than when a few go wrong.

"If my son didn't inherit the property of Malbone Littlepage, neither will Malbone Littlepage's son inherit mine. We are on a footing in that respect. As to paying rent, which some persons think so hard, what would

they do if they had no house to live in, or farm to work? If folks wish to purchase houses and farms, no one can prevent them if they have money to do it with; and if they have not, is it expected other people are to provide them with such things out of their own——"

Here the speaker was interrupted by a sudden whooping, and the Injins came pressing into the house in a way to drive all in the aisles before them. Men, women, and children leaped from the windows, the distance being trifling, while others made their escape by the two side-doors, the Injins coming in only by the main entrance. In less time than it takes to record the fact, the audience had nearly all dispersed.

CHAPTER VI.

"And yet it is said,—Labour is thy vocation: which is as much as to say,—let the magistrates be labouring men; and therefore should we be magistrates."

KING HENRY VI.

IN a minute or two the tumult ceased, and a singular scene presented itself. The church had four separate groups or parties left in it, besides the Injins, who crowded the main aisle. The chairman, secretary, two ministers and lecturer, remained perfectly tranquil in their seats, probably understanding quite well *they* had nothing to fear from the intruders. Mr. Warren and Mary were in another corner, under the gallery, he having disdained flight, and prudently kept his daughter at his side. My uncle and myself were the *pendants* of the two last named, occupying the opposite corner, also under the gallery. Mr. Hall, and two or

three friends who stuck by him, were in a pew near the wall, but about half way down the church, the former erect on a seat, where he had placed himself to speak.

"Proceed with your remarks, sir," coolly observed the chairman, who was one of those paradoxical anti-renters who has nothing to do with the Injins, though he knew all about them, and, as I have been told, was actually foremost in collecting and disbursing their pay. At this instant Seneca Newcome sneaked in at a side door, keeping as far as possible from the "disguised and armed," but curious to ascertain what would come next.

As for Hall, he behaved with admirable self-possession. He probably knew that his former auditors were collecting under the windows, and by raising his voice he would be easily heard. At all events, he did elevate his voice, and went on as if nothing had happened.

"I was about to say a word, Mr. Chairman, on the natur' of the two qualities that have, to me, at least, seemed uppermost in the lecturer's argooment"—yes, this sensible, well-principled man actually used that detestable sound, just as I have written it, calling 'argument' 'argooment'—what a pity it is that so little attention

is paid to the very first principles of speaking the language well in this country, the common schools probably doing more harm than they do good in this respect—" that have, to me, at least, seemed uppermost in the lecturer's argooment, and they are both those that God himself has viewed as of so great importance to our nature as to give his express commandments about them. He has commanded us not to steal, and he has commanded us not to covet our neighbour's goods; proof sufficient that the possession of property is sanctioned by divine authority, and that it is endowed with a certain sanctity of privilege. Now for the application.

" You can do nothing as to leases in existence, because the State can't impair a contract. A great deal is said about this government's being one of the people, and that the people ought to do as they please. Now, I'm a plain man, and am talking to plain men, and mean to talk plainly. That this is a government of the people, being a democracy, or because the sovereign power, in the last resort, resides in the body of the people, is true; but that this is a government of the people, in the common signification, or as too many of the people themselves understand it, is not true. This very

interest, about which there is so much commotion, or the right to interfere with contracts, is put beyond the people of the State, by a clause in the constitution of the United States. Now, the constitution of the United States might be altered, making another provision saying that 'no State shall ever pass any law to do away with the existence of durable leases,' and every man, woman and child in New York be opposed to such a change, but they would have to swallow it. Come, let us see what figures will do. There are twenty-seven States in actual existence, and soon will be thirty. I don't care on which number you calculate; say thirty, if you please, as that is likely to be the number before the constitution could be altered. Well, twenty-three of these States can put a clause into the constitution, saying you shan't meddle with leases. This might leave the seven most popular States, with every voter, opposed to the change. I've made a calculation, and find what the seven most populous States had in 1840, and I find that more than half of all the population of the country is contained in them seven States, which can be made to submit to a minority. Nor is this all; the alteration may be carried by only one vote in each of the

twenty-three States, and, deducting these from the electors in the seven dissenting States, you might have a constitutional change made in the country against a majority of say two millions! It follows that the people, in the common meaning, are not as omnipotent as some suppose. There's something stronger than the people, after all, and that's principles; and if we go to work to tear to pieces our own——"

It was impossible to hear another word that the speaker said. The idea that the people are not omnipotent, was one little likely to find favour among any portion of the population that fancies themselves to be peculiarly the people. So much accustomed to consider themselves invested with the exercise of a power which, in any case, can be rightfully exercised by only the whole people, have local assemblages got to be, that they often run into illegal excesses, fancying even their little fragment of the body politic infallible, as well as omnipotent, in such matters at least. To have it openly denied, therefore, that the popular fabric of American institutions is so put together, as to leave it in the power of a decided minority to change the organic law, as is unquestionably the fact in theory, however little likely to occur

in practice, sounded in the ears of Mr. Hall's auditors like political blasphemy. Those under the windows groaned, while the gang in the aisle whooped and yelled, and that in a fashion that had all the exaggeration of a caricature. It was very apparent that there was an end of all the deliberative part of the proceedings of the day.

Hall seemed neither surprised nor uneasy. He wiped his face very coolly, and then took his seat, leaving the Injins to dance about the church, flourishing their rifles and knives, in a way that might have frightened one less steady. As for Mr. Warren, he led Mary out, though there was a movement that threatened to stop him. My uncle and myself followed, the whooping and screaming being really unpleasant to the ear. As to the chairman, the secretary, and the two ministers of the gospel, they kept their stations on the stage, entirely self-possessed and unmolested. No one went near them, a forbearance that must have been owing to the often alleged fact that the real anti-renters, the oppressed tenantry of New York, and these vile masqueraders, had nothing to do with each other!

One of the astounding circumstances of the

times, is the general prevalence of falsehood among us, and the almost total suppression of truth. No matter what amount of evidence there may be to contradict a statement, or how often it has been disproved, it is reaffirmed with just as much assurance as if the matter had never been investigated; ay, and believed, as if its substance were uncontradicted. I am persuaded there is no part of the world, in which it is more difficult to get a truth into the public mind, when there is a motive to suppress it, than among ourselves. This may seem singular, when it is remembered how many journals there are, which are uttered with the avowed purpose to circulate information. Alas! the machinery which can be used to give currency to truth, is equally efficient in giving currency to falsehood. There are so many modes too, of diluting truth, in addition to the downright lies which are told, that I greatly question if one alleged fact, out of twenty that goes the rounds of the public prints, those of the commoner sort excepted, is true in all its essentials. It requires so much integrity of purpose, so much discrimination, such a sensitiveness of conscience, and often so large a degree of self-sacrifice in men to speak nothing but truth,

that one is not to expect that their more vulgar and irresponsible agents are to possess a quality that is so very rare among the very best of the principals.

If I was glad to get out of the church myself, the reader may depend on it, I was rejoiced to see Mr. Warren leading Mary towards the place where I had left his wagon, as if about to quit a scene that now promised nothing but clamour and wrangling, if not something more serious. Uncle Ro desired me to bring out the wagon in which we had left the farm; and, in the midst of a species of general panic, in which the women, in particular, went flying about in all directions, I proceeded to comply. It was at this moment that a general pause to all movements was produced by the gang of Injins pouring out of the church, bringing in their centre the late speaker, Mr. Hall. As the chairman, secretary, lecturer, and the two "ministers of the gospel," followed, it was conclusive as to the termination of any thing like further discussion.

My uncle called me back, and I thought was disposed to assist Hall, who, manfully supported by the two or three friends that had stood by him the whole day, was now moving towards us,

surrounded by a cluster of wrangling and menacing Injins; the whole party bearing no little resemblance to a pack of village curs that sets upon the strange dog that has ventured in among them.

Oaths and threats filled the air; and poor Hall's ears were offended by an imputation that, I dare say, they then heard for the first time. He was called a "d——d aristocrat," and a hireling in the pay of "d——d aristocrats." To all this, however, the sturdy and right-thinking blacksmith was very indifferent; well knowing there was not a fact connected with his existence, or a sentiment of his moral being, that would justify any such charge. It was in answer to this deadly imputation, that I first heard him speak again, after he had been interrupted in the church.

"Call me what you please," he cried, in his clear, full voice; "I don't mind hard names. There isn't a man among you who thinks I'm an aristocrat, or the hireling of any one; but I hope I am not yet so great a knave as to wish to rob a neighbour because he happens to be richer than I am myself."

"Who gave Hugh Littlepage his land?" demanded one, in the midst of the gang, speaking

without the affectation of mimicry, though the covering to his head sufficiently changed his voice. "You know, yourself, it came from the king."

"He never worked for an acre of it!" bawled another. "If he was a hard-working, honest man, like yourself, Tim Hall, we might bear it; but you know he is not. He's a spendthrift and an aristocrat."

"I know that hard hands don't make a man honest, any more than soft hands make him a rogue," answered Tim Hall, with spirit. "As for the Littlepages, they are gentlemen in every sense of the word, and always have been. Their word will pass even now, when the bond of many a man who sets himself up ag'in them wouldn't be looked at."

I was grateful and touched with this proof that a character, which I fully believed to be merited, was not lost on one of the most intelligent men of his class, in that part of the country. Envy, and covetousness, and malignancy, may lie as they will, but the upright recognise the upright; the truly poor know who most assuage their sorrows and relieve their wants; and the real lover of liberty understands that its privileges are not to be inter-

preted altogether in his own favour. I did not like the idea of such a man's being ill-treated by a gang of disguised blackguards—fellows, who added to the crime of violating a positive law, the high moral offence of prostituting the sacred principles of liberty, by professing to drag them into the service of a cause, which wanted very little, in its range, to include all the pickpockets and thieves in the land.

"They will do that noble fellow some injury, I fear," I whispered to my uncle.

"If it were not for the mortification of admitting our disguise, I would go forward at once, and attempt to bring him out of the crowd," was the answer. "But that will not do, under the circumstances. Let us be patient, and observe what is to follow."

"Tar and feathers!" shouted some one among the Injins; "Tar and feather him!" "Crop him, and send him home!" answered others. "Tim Hall has gone over to the enemy," added the Injin who asked whence I had my lands.

I fancied I knew that voice, and when its tones had been repeated two or three times, it struck me it was that of Seneca Newcome. That Seneca was an anti-renter, was no secret; but that he, a lawyer, would be guilty of the great

indiscretion of committing felony, was a matter about which one might well entertain a doubt. To urge others to be guilty, was a different matter, but to commit himself seemed unlikely. With a view to keep an eye on the figure I distrusted, I looked out for some mode by which he might be known. A patch, or rather goar in the calico, answered admirably, for on looking at others, I saw that this goar was accidental, and peculiar to that particular dress, most probably owing to a deficiency in the material originally supplied.

All this time, which indeed was but a minute or two, the tumult continued. The Injins seemed undetermined what to do; equally afraid to carry out their menaces against Hall, and unwilling to let him go. At the very instant when we were looking for something serious, the storm abated, and an unexpected calm settled on the scene. How this was effected, I never knew; though it is reasonable to suppose an order had been communicated to the Injins, by some signal that was known only to themselves. Of the result there was no doubt; the crowd around Hall opened, and that sturdy and uncompromising freeman came out of it, wiping his face, looking heated and a little angry. He

did not yield, however, remaining near the spot, still supported by the two or three friends who had accompanied him from Mooseridge.

My uncle Ro, on reflection, conceived it wisest not to seem in a hurry to quit the village, and as soon as I had ascertained that Mr. Warren had come to a similar decision, and had actually taken refuge in the house of a parishioner, I 'was agreeable,' as the English say. While the pedlar, therefore, made a new display of his watches, I strolled round among the crowd, Injins and others intermixed, to see what could be seen, and to glean intelligence. In the course of my wanderings, chance brought me close to the side of the masquer in the dress with the goar. Tickling him gently on the elbow, I induced him to step a little aside with me, where our conversation would not be overheard.

"Why might you be Injin—gentleman as you be?" I asked, with as much of an air of simplicity as I could assume.

The start with which this question was met, convinced me I was right; and I scarce needed farther confirmation of the justice of my suspicion. If I had, however, it was afforded.

"Why ask Injin dat?" returned the man with the goar.

"Vell, dat might do, and it might not do, 'Squire Newcome; but it might not do wid one as knows you as vell as I know you. So dell me; vy might you be Injin?"

"Harkee," said Seneca, in his natural speech, and evidently much disturbed by my discovery; "you must, on no account, let it be known who I am. You see, this Injin business is ticklish work, and the law might—that is—*you* could get nothing by mentioning what you know, but as you have said, as I'm a gentleman, and an attorney at law, it wouldn't sound well to have it said that I was caught dressed up in this manner, playing Injin."

"Ja—ja—I oonderstants—gentlemans might not do sich dings, und not be laughed at—dat's all."

"Ye-e-e-s—that's all, as you say, so be careful what you say, or hint about it. Well, since you've found me out, it's my treat. What shall't be?"

This was not very elegant for a "gentleman," and "an attorney at law," certainly, but, as it belonged to the school of Mr. Newcome, it struck me it might not be prudent for me to betray that I belonged to one of a different sort. Affecting contentment, therefore, I told him,

what he pleased, and he led me to a store of all business, that was kept by his brother, and in which, as I afterwards found, he himself was a partner. Here he generously treated me to a glass of fiery whiskey, which I managed to spill in a way that prevented my being choked. This was adroitly enough effected, as a refusal to drink would have been taken as a most suspicious circumstance in a German. As respects Americans of my assumed class, I am happy to say it is now more possible for one to refuse a glass than to accept it. It says a good deal in favour of the population of a country, when even the coachman declines his whet. Nevertheless, a nation may become perfectly sober, and fall away with fearful rapidity on other great essentials. On the subject of sobriety, I agree altogether with my uncle, in thinking that the Americans drink much less than most, if not less than any European nation; the common notion that long prevailed to the contrary in the country, being no more than the fruits of the general disposition, in other people, to decry democracy, aided somewhat, perhaps, by the exaggerations that are so common in all the published statistics of morals.

I remarked that very few even of the Injins

drank, though they now began to circulate freely among the crowd and in the stores. Seneca left me as soon as he fancied he had clenched my discretion with a treat, and I stood looking round at the manner in which the "armed and disguised" conducted themselves. One fellow, in particular, attracted my attention; and his deportment may be taken as a specimen of that of many of his comrades.

I was soon struck by the fact that Orson Newcome, Seneca's brother and partner, was obviously desirous of having as little to do with any of the Injins as possible. As soon as one entered his store, he appeared uneasy; and whenever one left it, he seemed glad. At first, I was inclined to think that Orson,—what names will not the great eastern family adopt, before they have got through with their catalogue!—really, they seem to select their appellations as they do so many other things, or to prove that they'll do as they please;—but, Orson, I fancied at first, was influenced by principle, and did not care to conceal the disgust he felt at such audacious and illegal proceedings. But I soon discovered my mistake, by ascertaining the true cause of his distaste for the presence of an Injin.

"Injin want calico, for shirt"—said one of these worthies significantly, to Orson, who, at first, affected not to hear him.

The demand was repeated, however, with additional significance, when the cloth was reluctantly thrown on the counter.

"Good," said the Injin, after examining the quality; "cut Injin twenty yard—*good* measure, hear!"

The calico was cut, with a sort of desperate submission; the twenty yards were folded, enveloped, and handed to the customer, who coolly put the bundle under his arm, saying, as he turned to leave the store—"Charge it to Down Rent."

The mystery of Orson's sullenness was now explained. As invariably follows the abandonment of principle, the fomenters of wrong were suffering smartly through the encroachments of their own agents. I ascertained, afterwards, that these very Injins, who had been embodied in hundreds, with a view to look down law, and right, and the sacred character of contracts, had begun to carry out their main principle; and were making all sorts of demands, on the pockets and property of their very employers, under one pretence or another, but with very obvious

tendencies towards their own benefit. The "Spirit of anti-Rentism" was beginning to develope itself in this form, under the system of violence; as, under that of legislative usurpation, and legislative truckling to numbers, which is most to be feared from the character of our representatives, it will as certainly be developed, unless suppressed in the bud, by such further demands on its complaisant ministers, as will either compel them to repent of their first false step, will drive the State to civil war, or will drive all the honest men out of it.

I did not remain long in the store. After quitting it, I went in quest of Mr. Warren and Mary, anxious to know if I could be of any service to them. The father thanked me for this attention, and let me know that he was now about to quit the village, as he saw others beginning to go away, among whom were Hall, who was an old and much valued acquaintance of his, and whom he had invited to stop at the rectory to dine. He advised us to imitate the example, as there were strangers among the Injins, who might be addicted to drinking.

On this information I hunted up my uncle, who had actually sold most of his trinkets, and all his watches but one, the secret of his great

success being the smallness of his prices. He sold for what he had bought, and in some instances for even less, quitting the place with the reputation of being the *most reasonable* jewel-pedlar who had ever appeared in it.

The road was beginning to be lined with vehicles carrying home the people who had collected to hear the lecture. As this was the first occasion which offered for witnessing such an exhibition, since my return, I examined the different parties we passed, with a view to comparison. There is a certain air of rusticity, even in the large towns of America, which one does not meet with in the capitals of the old world. But the American country is less rustic than any part of the world with which I am acquainted, England alone excepted. Of course, in making such a remark, no allusion is intended to the immediate environs of very large towns; though I am far from certain that the population of St. Ouen, the Runnymede of France, and which stands within a league of the walls of Paris, would not have offered a more decidedly rustic spectacle, than that which we then saw. As repects females, this was very strikingly true; scarce one being visible who had that air of coarseness, and ignorance, and vulgarity, which

denotes a degraded condition and a life of hardships. There was little apparent that marked a peasantry in the moral sense of the word; but the whole population seemed to be at their ease, using neat and well-kept vehicles; solid, active horses; and being themselves reasonably well, though not very tastefully clad. Yet, all this was on a leased estate, under the dire oppression of a landlord, and beneath the shadow of aristocracy! A short dialogue which took place between my uncle and two sturdy, weather-beaten husbandmen, who drove their horse, for a short distance, on a walk at the side of ours, made the impression produced by such facts deeper than it might otherwise have been. I will relate it.

"You are Jarmans, I b'lieve," commenced the oldest of the two men, a grey-headed tenant of my own, of the name of Holmes, who was well known to us both—"Jarmans from the old countries, I hear?"

"Ja—we bees from der olt coontries; und dat is a great vay off."

"Ye-e-s, I s'pose it is—I've heern tell of them countries, often. Doos the landlord system exist there?"

"Ja—dere ist landtlorts all ofer dis worlt, I do dinks; und denants, doo."

"Well, and how is the plan liked there; or be folks thinking of getting red (rid) on't?"

"Nein—how might dey gets red of it? It ist der law, you might see, und vhat ist der law moost be done."

This answer puzzled old Holmes a good deal. He passed a hand over his face, and turned to his companion, one Tubbs, also a tenant on my estate, as if to ask assistance. Tubbs was one of the new school; a school that makes more laws than it respects, and belongs to the movement. He is a man that fancies the world never knew any thing of principles, facts, or tendencies, until the commencement of this century.

"What sort of a government had you in your own country?" demanded Tubbs.

"Bretty goot. Mein coontry was Preussen; und dat might be t'ought a bretty goot gofernment."

"Yes, but it's a kingly government, I take it;—it seems to me, I have heern tell of kings in that land."

"Ja, ja—dere ist ein koenig—one king. De last might be der goet koenig Vilhelm, und now

dere ist his son, who ist a goot koenig too, as I might dink. Ja, ja—dere ist a king."

"That explains it all," cried Tubbs, with a sort of triumph. "You see they have a king, and so they have tenants; but, here we have no king, and we have no need of landlords. Every man, in a free country, should be his own landlord; that's my doctrine, and to that I'll stick."

"There is some reason in that, fri'nd; isn't that your idee?" asked Holmes.

"Vell, I might not oonderstandt. Dost der shentlemans object to landlordts, in his coontry, because dere might be landlordts in dem coontries ast might haf kings?"

"That's it! That's just the reason on't, and the true principle!" answered Tubbs. "Kings and liberty can't go together; and landlords and liberty can't go together."

"But might not der law in dis coontry be to haf landlordts too? I hear dat it ist so."

"Yes, that is the law as it stands; but we mean to alter it all. We have got so many votes, now, as to be sure to have both parties with us at a gin'ral election; and give us the governor on our side, with the sartainty of votes enough to turn an election, and we're pretty

confident of success. Votes is all that is wanting, in a truly free country, for men to have things pretty much in their own way."

"Und dost you mean to haf not'in dat might be in de coontries ast haf kings?"

"To be sure not. What do we want of any of your lordly contrivances, to make the rich richer and the poor poorer?"

"Vell, you moost alter de law of nature, if de rich vilt not get riches, und de poor vill not feel dey be poor. De piple dells us dat de misery of de poor ist deir poverty."

"Ay, ay, bible talk dont go for much in politics. Sabba' days are set aside for the bible, and week days for public and private matters. Now, here is Hugh Littlepage, of the same flesh and blood as my neighbour Holmes and myself be—no better and no worse; yes, I'm willing to allow he's no worse, in the main, though in some things I do think we might claim the preference; but I'll allow he's no worse, for the sake of argooment. Each on us rents a farm of this Littlepage, of a hundred acres good. Wa-al, this land we till, and crop, and labour, with our hands, and the hands of our sons, and hired help, perhaps; and yet we have to pay fifty dollars a-piece, annually, to

that youngster Hugh Littlepage, for rent; which, money he takes and squanders where he pleases, in riotous livin', for 't we know. Now, is that right, I ask; and isn't it an onsuitable state of things for a republican country?"

"Und you dinks yoong Littlebage might spend his money in riotous lifin' in foreign landts?"

"Sartain—that's the tale, hereabouts; and I have seen a man who knows another, that has an acquaintance who has been in Paris, and who tells the people of his neighbourhood that he stood at the door of the king's palace one day, and actually saw both the Littlepages going in to pay 'tribute unto Cæsar,' as it is called—I suppose you know; and they tell me that all that goes to see a king, has to kneel and kiss his hand—some say his toe. Do you happen to know how it is in the old countries?"

"It ist not so; I haf seen more kings as half a dozen, und dey dost not kneel down and kiss deir hants, except on sartain business. Dey might not allvays hear what ist true, in dis coontry."

"Wa-a-l, I don't know—I never was there to see," answered Tubbs, in that peculiar manner, which, whenever it is used by an American,

may safely be interpreted to mean, "I'll not contradict you, but I'll believe what I please."

"That is what I've heern say. But, why should we pay rent to young Littlepage to spend in riotous living?"

"I might not know, oonless you have hiret his landt, und agree't to pay him rent; in which case you might do as you agree't."

"But when the bargain's of a kingly natur', I say no. Every country has its natur', and every government has its natur', and all things should be in conformity with natur'. Now its ag'in natur' to pay rent in a republican country. We want nothing here, that's in common with lords and kings."

"Vell, den, you most alter your whole coontry. You might not haf wifes und children; you might not lif in houses, und plough de landt; you might not eat und drink, und you might not wear any shirt."

Tubbs looked a little astonished. Like the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, he was amazed to find he had been talking prose all his life without knowing it. There is no question that laws unsuitable to the institutions of a republic might exist in a kingdom, but it is equally certain that the law which compels the tenant to pay

for the use of his house, or farm, is not one of the number. Tubbs, however, had been so thoroughly persuaded, by dint of talking, there was something exceedingly anti-republican in one man's paying rent to another, that he was not disposed to give the matter up so easily.

"Ay, ay," he answered, "we have many things in common with kingdoms, as *men*, I must allow; but why should we have anything in common of this aristocratic natur'? A free country should contain freemen, and how *can* a man be free if he doesn't own the land out of which he makes his living?"

"Und if he makes his lifin' out of anoder man's land, he might be honest enough to pay for its use, I dinks."

"But, we hold it *ought* not to be another man's land, but the land of him who works it."

"Dell me dis—dost you efer let out a field to a poor neighbour on shares?"

"Sartain; we all do that, both to accommodate folks, and to get crops when we are crowded with work ourselves."

"Und why might not all dat crop pelong to him dat works de field?"

"Oh! that's doin' business on a small scale, and can't do anybody harm. But the American

institutions never intended that there should be a great privileged class among us, like the lords in Europe."

"Did you efer haf any difficulty in getting your hire for a field dat might be so let out?"

"Sartain. There's miserable neighbours as well as them that isn't. I had to sue the very last chap I had such dealin's with."

"Und dit das law let you haf your money?"

"To be sure it did! What would law be good for, if it didn't help a body to his rights?"

"Und dost den tenants of dis broperty let Hugh Littlebage haf his rents, ast might be due?"

"That's a different thing, I tell you. Hugh Littlepage has more than he wants, and spends his money in riotous livin' in foreign parts."

"Vell, und sooppose your neighpours might vants to ask you what you do wit' your tollars after you shall sell your pork and beef, to see you mate goot use of it—might dat be liperty?"

"That! Why, who do you think would trouble himself about my 'arnin's? It's the big fish, only, that folks talk about, and care about, in such matters."

"Den folks make Hugh Littlebage a big fish,

by dair own mettlin', und enfy, und cofetousness—is it not so?"

"Harkee fri'nd, I some think you're leanin' yourself to kingly ways, and to the idees in which you was brought up. Take my advice, and abandon all these notions as soon as you can, for they 'll never be popular in this part of the world."

Popular! How broad has the signification of this word got to be! In the eyes of two-thirds of the population it already means, "what is right." *Vox populi, vox Dei.* To what an extent is this little word made to entwine itself around all the interests of life! When it is deemed expedient to inculcate certain notions in the minds of the people, the first argument used is to endeavour to persuade the inhabitants of New York that the inhabitants of Pennsylvania are already of that mind. A simulated public opinion is the strongest argument used, indeed, on every occasion of the public discussion of any disputed point. He that can count the most voices is a better man than he who can give the most reasons; numbers carrying more weight with them, than facts, or law. It is evident, that, while in some things, such a system may work well, there are others, and

those of overshadowing importance, in which its tendency is direct and fearful towards corruption.

As soon as Tubbs had given his admonition, he applied the whip to his horse, and trotted on, leaving us to follow at the best gait we could extort from Tom Miller's hack.

CHAPTER VII.

"If he were with me, King of Tuscarora,
Gazing as I upon thy portrait now,
In all its medalled, fringed, and bearded glory,
Its eyes' dark beauty, and its thoughtful brow—

Its brow, half-martial, and half-diplomatic;
Its eye, upsoaring, like an eagle's wings;
Well might he boast that we, the democratic,
Outrival Europe—even in our kings.'

RED JACKET.

My uncle Ro said nothing, when the two tenants left us; though I saw, by his countenance, that he felt all the absurdity of the stuff we had just been listening to. We had got within half a mile of the woods, when eight Injins came galloping up to a wagon that was directly behind us, and which contained another of my tenants, with his eldest son, a lad of sixteen, whom he had brought with him as a scholar, in having his sense of right unsettled by the selfish mystification that was

going on in the land; a species of fatherly care that was of very questionable merit. I said there were eight of these Injins, but there were only four horses, each beast carrying double. No sooner did the leaders of the party reach the wagon I have mentioned, than it was stopped, and its owner was commanded to alight. The man was a decided down-renter, but he obeyed the order with a very ill grace; and did not obey at all, indeed, until he was helped out of the wagon, by a little gentle violence of this fragment of his own *corps d'armée*. The boy was soon put into the highway, when two of the "disguised and armed" leaped into the vacant places, and drove on, passing us at a furious pace, making a parting nod to the owner of the vehicle, and consoling him for its temporary loss, by calling out, "Injin want him—Injin good fellow—you know."

Whether the discomfited father *knew* or not, we could not tell; but he *looked* as if he wished the Injins anywhere but in their "happy hunting grounds." We drove on laughing, for it was in human nature to be amused at such an exhibition of the compulsory system, or of "liberty and equality carried out;" and more particularly so, when I was certain that the

"honest, hard-working, horny-hand tiller of the soil" wanted to cheat me out of a farm; or, to put his case in the most favourable point of view, wanted to compel me to sell him one at his own price. Nor did our amusement stop here. Before we reached the woods, we found Holmes and Tubbs in the highway, too; the other two worthies who had been mounted *en croupe* having dispossessed them of their wagon also, and told them to "charge it to Injin." We afterwards learned that this practice was very general; the owner recovering his horse and team, in the course of a few days, by hearing it had been left, secretly, at some tavern within a few miles of his residence. As for old Holmes, he was in an honest indignation when we came up with him, while even Tubbs looked soured and discontented, or as if he thought friends were entitled to better treatment.

"What is der matter?" cried out uncle Ro, who could hardly keep from laughing the whole time; "vhat ist der matter now? Vhere might be your hantsome vaggin und your gay horse?"

"It's too bad!—yes, it's eeny most too bad!" grunted Holmes. "Here am I, past three-

score-and-ten, which is the full time of man, the bible says—and what the bible says *must* be true, you know!—here have they trundled me into the highway, as they would a sack of potatoes, and left me to walk every step of four miles to reach my own door! It's too bad—it's eeny most too bad!"

"Oh! dat might be a trifle, compared to vhat it vould be to haf peen drundelled out of your farm."

"I know't!—I know't!—I understand!—it's all meant for the good cause—to put down aristocracy, and make men raa'ly equal, as the law intends them to be—but this, I say, is eeny most too bad!"

"Und you so olt!"

"Seventy-six, if I'm a day. My time can't be long, and my legs is weak, they be. Yes, the bible says a man's time is limited pretty much to three-score-and-ten—and I'll never stand out ag'in the bible."

"Und vhat might der piple say apout vanting to haf your neighpours' goots?"

"It cries that down dreadfully! Yes, there's plenty of that in the good book, I know from havin' heard it read—ay, and havin' read it myself, these three-score years; it *doos* cry it

down, the most awfully. I shall tell the Injins this, the next time they want my wagon. There's bible ag'in all sich practices."

"Der piple ist a goot pook."

"That it is—that it is—and great is the consolation and hope that I have known drawn from its pages. I'm glad to find that they set store by the bible in Jarmany. I was pretty much of the notion, we had most of the religion that's goin', in Ameriky, and it's pleasant to find there *is* some in Jarmany."

All this time old Holmes was puffing along on foot, my uncle Ro walking his horse, in order to enjoy his discourse.

"Oh! ja—ja, ja—dere might be *some* religion left in der olt worlt—de puritans, as you might call dem, did not pring it all away."

"Desp'rate good people them! We got all our best sarcumstances from our puritan forefathers. Some folks say that all Ameriky has got, is owing to them very saints!"

"Ja—und if it bees not so, nefer mind; for dey will be sartain to get all Ameriky."

Holmes was mystified, but he kept tugging on, casting wistful glances at our wagon, as he endeavoured to keep up with it. Fearful we might trot on and leave him, the old man continued

the discourse. "Yes," he said, "our authority for everything must come from the bible, a'ter all. It tells us we hadn't ought to bear malice, and that's a rule I endivour to act up to; for an old man, you see, can't indulge his sinful natur' if he would. Now I've been down to Little Neest to attend a Down Rent Meetin',—but I bear no more malice ag'in Hugh Littlepage, not I, no more than if he wern't a bit of my landlord! All I want of him is my farm, on such a lay as I can live by, and the b'ys a'ter me. I look on it as dreadful hard and oppressive that the Littlepages should refuse to let us have the place, seein' that I have worked it now for the tarm of three whull lives."

"Und dey agreet dat dey might sell you de farm, when dem dree lifes yast up?"

"No, not in downright language they didn't, as I must allow. In the way of bargain, I must own the advantage is altogether on the side of Littlepage. That was his grand'ther's act; and if you wun't drive quite so fast, as I'm getting a little out of wind, I'll tell you all about it. That is just what we complain on; the bargain being so much in his favour. Now, my lives *have* hung on desp'rately, haven't they, Shabbakuk?" appealing to Tubbs.

"It's every hour of forty-five years sin' I tuck that lease, and one life, that of my old woman, is still in bein', as they call it, though it's a sort of bein' that a body might as well not have as have. She can't stand it a great while longer, and then that farm that I set so much store by, out of which I've made my livelihood most of my life, and on which I've brought up fourteen children, will go out of my hands to enrich Hugh Littlepage, who's got so much now he can't spend it at hum like honest folks, but must go abroad, to waste it in riotous living, as they tell us. Yes, onless the governor and the legislature helps me out of my difficulty, I don't see but Hugh Littlepage must get it all, making the 'rich richer, and the poor poorer.'"

"Und vhy must dis cruel ding come to pass? Vhy might not mans keep his own in Ameriky?"

"That's just it, you see. It isn't my own, in law, only by natur', like, and the 'speret of the Institutions,' as they call it. I'm sure I don't kear much how I get it, so it only comes. If the governor can only make the landlords sell, or even give away, he may sartainly count on my support, providin' they don't put the prices too

high. I hate high prices, which is onsuitable to a free country."

"Fery drue. I sooppose your lease might gif you dat farm quite reasonaple, as it might be mate so long ago?"

"Only two shillings the acre," answered the old fellow, with a knowing look, which as much as boasted of the capital bargain he had in the affair, "or twenty-five dollars a year for a hundred acres. That's no great matter, I'm ready to allow; but my lives havin' held on so desp'rately, until land's got up to forty dollars an acre about here, I can't no more expect sich another lay than I can expect to go to Congress. I can rent that place, to-morrow mornin', for 150 dollars of as good money as any man can pay."

"Und how much might you expect 'squire Littlebage woult ask on a new lease?"

"Some think as much as 62½ dollars; though other some think he would let it to *me* for 50 dollars for three lives longer. The old gin'ral told me when he signed the lease that I was gettin' a bargain, 'but, niver mind,' said he, 'if I give you good tarms, you'll make the better tenant, and I look to posterity and their

benefit as much as I do to my own. If I don't get the advantage I might,' says he, 'my children, or my children's children, will. A man mustn't altogether live for himself in this world, especially if he has children.' Them was good idees, wasn't they?"

"You might not dink differently. Und, how moch woult you love to bay for a deet of de farm?"

"Wa-a-l, there's differences of opinion on that subject. The most approved notion is that Hugh Littlepage ought to be made to give warrantees, with full covenants, as it's called; and covenants is all in all, in a deed, you know——"

"But might not be in a lease?" put in uncle Ro, somewhat drily.

"That dcpinds—But, some say them deeds ought to be given, if the tenants allow the landlords the worth of the land, when the patentee got it, and interest down to the present day. It does seem a desp'rate price to pay for land, to give principal and interest, and to throw in all that has been paid beside?"

"Haf you made a calculation, to see vhat it might come to?"

"Shabbakuk has—tell the gentleman, Shabbakuk, how much you make it come to, the acre."

Shabbakuk was a far deeper rogue than his neighbour Holmes. The last was merely a man of selfish and narrow views, who, from passing a long life with no other object before him than that of scraping together property, had got his mind completely ensnared, in the meshes of this world's net; whereas his companion took the *initiative*, as the French have it, in knavery, and not only carried out, but invented the schemes of the wicked. He clearly did not like this appeal to his arithmetic, but having no suspicion to whom he was talking, and fancying every man in the lower conditions of life must be an ally in a plan to make "the rich poorer; and the poor richer;" he was a little more communicative than might otherwise have been the case. After reflecting a moment, he gave us his answer, reading from a paper in his hand, on which the whole sum had been elaborately worked for the occasion of the late meeting.

"The land was worth ten cents an acre, maybe, when the first Littlepage got it, and that is a liberal price. Now, that was eighty

years since, for we don't count old Herman Mordaunt's time, as anything; seeing that the land was worth next to nothin', in his time. The interest on ten cents at seven per cent. is seven mills a year, or 560 mills for eighty years. This is without compound; compound being unlawful, and nothin' ag'in law should be taken into the account. Add the ten cents to the 560 mills, and you get 660 mills, or sixty-six cents. Now this sum, or a sum calculated on the same principles, all the tenants are willing to pay for their farms,* and if justice prevails they will get them."

"Dat seems but little to bay for landt dat might now rent for a dollar an acre, each year."

"You forgit that the Littlepages have had the rent these eighty years, the whull time."

"Und de denants haf hat de farms dese eighty years, de whole time, too."

"Oh! we put the land ag'in the work. If my neighbour Holmes, here, has had his farm forty-five years, so the farm has had his work

* In order that the reader may understand Mr. Hugh Littlepage is not inventing, I will add that propositions still more extravagant than these have been openly circulated among the anti-renters, up and down the country.—EDITOR.

forty-five years as an off-set. You may depind on't the governor and the legislature understand all that."

"If dey does," answered uncle Ro, whipping his horse into a trot, "dey must be fit for deir high stations. It is goot for a country to haf great governors, and great legisladurs. *Guten tag.*"

Away he went, leaving neighbour Holmes, Shabbakuk Tubbs, the governor and legislature, with their joint morals, wisdom, logic, and philosophy, in the highway, together. My uncle Ro shook his head, and then he laughed, as the absurdity of what had just passed forced itself on his imagination.

I dare say many may be found, who have openly professed principles and opinions identical, in substance, with what has just been related here, who will be disposed to deny them, when they are thrown into their faces. There is nothing unusual in men's refusing to recognise their own children, when they are ashamed of the circumstances that brought them into being. But in the course of this controversy, I have often heard arguments in discourse, and have often read them in the journals, as they have been put into the mouths of men in authority,

and that too in their public communications, which, stripped of their very thin coverings, are pretty much on a level with those of Holmes and Tubbs. I am aware that no governor has, *as yet*, alluded to the *hardships* of the tenants, under the limited leases, but it would be idle to deny that the door has been opened to principles, or a want of principles, that must sweep away all such property in the current of reckless popular clamour, unless the evil be soon arrested. I say *evil*, for it must prove a curse to any community to break down the securities of property, as it is held in what has hitherto been thought its most secure form, and, what is still of more importance in a moral point of view, all to appease the cravings of cupidity, as they are exhibited in the masses.

We were soon out of sight of Holmes and Tubbs, and in the woods. I confess that I expected, each instant, to overtake Hall in the hands of the Injins; for the movement among that class of persons had appeared to me as one directed particularly against him. We saw nothing of the sort, however, and had nearly reached the northern limits of the bit of forest, when we came in sight of the two wagons which had been so cavalierly taken possession of, and of the

two horses ridden by the mounted men. The whole were drawn up on one side of the highway, under the charge of a single Injin, in a manner to announce that we were approaching a point of some interest.

My uncle and myself fully expected to be again stopped, as we drove up to the place just mentioned; not only was the track of the road left clear, however, but we were suffered to pass without a question. All the horses had been in a lather, as if driven very hard; though, otherwise, there was nothing to indicate trouble, if we except the presence of the solitary sentinel. From this fellow, neither sign nor order molested us; but on we went, at Tom Miller's horse's favourite amble, until we were so near the verge of the wood, as to get a view into the open fields beyond. Here, indeed, we obtained a sight of certain movements that, I confess, gave me some little concern.

Among the bushes that lined the highway, and which have been already mentioned, I got a glimpse of several of the "disguised and armed," who were evidently lying in ambush. Their number might have been twenty in all; and, it was now sufficiently apparent, that those who had pressed the wagons had been hurrying

forward to re-enforce their party. At this point, I felt quite certain we should be stopped; but we were not. We were suffered to pass without question, as we had just passed the wagons and horses, though it must have been known to the party that we were fully aware of their presence at that particular spot. But, on we went, and were soon, unmolested, in the open country.

It was not long, however, before the mystery was explained. A road descended from the higher ground, which lay to the westward of us, a little on our left, and a party of men was coming down it, at a quick walk, which, at the first glance, I mistook for a detachment of the Injins; but which, at a second look, I ascertained to be composed of Indians, or real red men. The difference between the two is very great, as every American will at once admit, though many who read this manuscript will be obliged to me for an explanation. There is "Indian" and "Injin." The Injin is a white man, who, bent on an unworthy and illegal purpose, is obliged to hide his face, and to perform his task in disguise. The Indian is a red man, who is neither afraid, nor ashamed, to show his countenance, equally to friend or enemy. The

first is the agent of designing demagogues, the hireling of a discontented and grasping spirit, who mocks at truth and right by calling himself one who labours to carry out "the spirit of those Institutions" which he dishonours and is afraid to trust; while the other serves himself only, and is afraid of nothing. One is skulking from, and shirking the duties of civilization, while the other, though a savage, is, at least, true to his own professions.

There they were, sure enough, a party of some sixteen or eighteen of the real aborigines. It is not an uncommon thing to meet with an Indian, or two, strolling about the country selling baskets—formerly it was brooms of birch, but the march of improvement has nearly banished so rude a manufacture from the country—with a squaw, or two, in company; but it is now very unusual to meet a true Indian warrior in the heart of the State, carrying his rifle and tomahawk, as was the case with all those who were so swiftly descending the road. My uncle Ro was quite as much astonished as I was myself; and he pulled up at the junction of the two highways, in order to await the arrival of the strangers.

"These are real Redskins, Hugh—and of

a noble tribe," cried my uncle, as a still nearer approach gave him a better and better view. "Warriors of the West, out of all question, with one white man in attendance—what can such a party possibly want at Ravensnest!"

"Perhaps the anti-renters intend to enlarge their plans, and have a scheme to come out upon us, with an alliance formed with the true sons of the forest—may they not intend intimidation?"

"Whom could they thus intimidate, but their own wives and children? But, here they come, in a noble body, and we can speak to them."

There they did come, indeed; seventeen of the finer specimens of the Redskins, as they are now sometimes seen passing among us in bodies, moving to or from their distant prairies; for the white man has already forced the Indian, with the bears, and the elk, and the moose, out of the forests of America, upon those vast plains.

What is to be the end of the increase of this nation, is one of the mysteries of Divine Providence. If faithful to the right, if *just*, not in the sense of yielding to the clamours of the many, but in the sense of good laws, if true to themselves, the people of this republic may laugh at European interference and European

power, when brought to bear on their home interests, as so much of the lumbering policy of ages no longer suited to the facts and feelings of our own times, and push on to the fulfilment of a destiny, which, if carried out on the apparent designs of the ruler of the earth, will leave that of all other States which have preceded us as much in the shade, as the mountain leaves the valley. But, it must not be forgotten that the brightest dawns often usher in the darkest days; that the most brilliant youths frequently precede manhoods of disappointment and baffled wishes; that even the professed man of God can fall away from his vows and his faith, and finish a career that was commenced in virtue and hope, in profligacy and sin. Nations are no more safe from the influence of temptation than individuals, and this has a weakness peculiarly its own. Instead of falling back on its popular principle, in extremities, as its infallible safeguard, it is precisely in the irresponsible and grasping character of that principle that its danger is to be apprehended. That principle, which, kept within the limits of right, is so admirably adapted to restraining the ordinary workings of cupidity and selfishness, as they are familiarly seen in narrow governments,

when permitted to overrun the boundaries placed for its control, becomes a torrent that has broken out of its icy bed, in the Spring, and completely defaces all that is beneficial or lovely, in either nature or art, that may happen to lie in its course. As yet, the experience of two centuries has offered nothing so menacing to the future prosperity of this country, as the social fermentation which is at this moment at work, in the State of New York. On the result of this depends the solution of the all-important question, whether principles are to rule this republic, or men; and these last, too, viewed in their most vulgar and repulsive qualities, or as the mere creatures of self, instead of being the guardians and agents of that which ought to be. It is owing to this state of things, that we have already seen a legislature occupied with discussing the modes of evading the provisions of its own laws, and men who ought to stand before the world, stern and uncompromising in their public morals, manifesting a most pernicious ingenuity in endeavouring to master and overreach each other in wielding the arts of the demagogue.

As the Indians entered the north and south road, or that in which we had stopped, the

whole party came to a halt, with characteristic courtesy, as if to meet our wish to speak to them. The foremost of the band, who was also the oldest, being a man of sixty, if not older, nodded his head, and uttered the usual conventional salutation of "Sago, sago."

"Sago," said my uncle, and "Sago" put in I.

"How do?" continued the Indian, who we now discovered spoke English. "What call this country?"

"This is Ravensnest. The village of Little Nest is about a mile and a half on the other side of that wood."

The Indian now turned, and in his deep guttural tones communicated this intelligence to his fellows. The information obviously was well received, which was as much as saying that they had reached the end of their journey. Some conversation next succeeded, delivered in brief, sententious remarks, when the old chief again turned to us. I call him chief, though it was evident that the whole party was composed of chiefs. This was apparent by their medals, their fine appearance generally, and by their quiet, dignified, not to say lofty, bearing. Each of them was in a light summer attire, wearing the moccasin and leggings, &c.; the calico shirt,

or a thin blanket, that was cast around the upper part of the person, much as the Roman may be supposed to have worn his toga; all carrying the rifle, the bright, well-scoured tomahawk, and the sheathed knife. Each, too, had his horn and his bullet-pouch, and some of the more youthful were a little elaborate in their ornaments, in the way of feathers, and such presents as they had received on their long journey. Not one of them all, however, was painted.

"This Raven-nest, eh?" continued the old chief, speaking directly, but with sufficient courtesy.

"As I have said. The village lies on the other side of that wood; the house from which the name is taken is a mile and a half in the other direction."

This, too, was translated, and a low, but general expression of pleasure was given.

"Any Injins 'bout here, eh?" demanded the chief, looking so earnestly at the same time as to surprise us both.

"Yes," answered my uncle. "There *are* Injins—a party is in the edge of the wood, there, within thirty rods of you, at this moment."

With great rapidity this fact was communicated to the eager listeners, and there was a sensation in the party; though it was a sensation betrayed as such feelings are only betrayed among the aborigines of this part of the world; quietly, reservedly, and with a coldness amounting nearly to indifference. We were amused, however, at noting how much more interest this news awakened than would probably have been excited had these red men been told a town like London was on the other side of the wood. As children are known to feel most interest in children, so did these children of the forest seem to be most alive to an interest in these unexpected neighbours, brethren of the same habits and race, as they unquestionably imagined. After some earnest discourse among themselves, the old chief, whose name turned out to be Prairiefire, once more addressed himself to us.

"What tribe, eh? Know tribe?"

"They are called Anti-rent Injins—a new tribe in this part of the country, and are not much esteemed."

"Bad Injin, eh?"

"I am afraid so. They are not honest enough to go in paint, but wear shirts over their faces."

Another long and wondering conference succeeded. It is to be supposed that such a *tribe* as that of the Anti-renters was hitherto unknown among the American savages. The first intelligence of the existence of such a people would naturally awaken great interest, and we were soon requested to show them the way to the spot where this unheard-of tribe might be found. This was going somewhat further than my uncle had anticipated, but he was not a man to beat a retreat when he had once undertaken an enterprise. After a short deliberation with himself, he signified his assent; and alighting from our wagon, we fastened Tom Miller's horse to a stake of one of the fences, and set off, on foot, as guides to our new brethren, in seeking the great tribe of the Anti-renters! We had not gone half the distance to the woods before we met Holmes and Tubbs, who, getting a cast in another wagon, until they reached the place where their own vehicle was stationed, had recovered that, and were now on their way home, apprehensive that some new freak of their great allies might throw them out into the highway again. This wagon, our own excepted, was the only one that had yet emerged from the wood, the

owners of some twenty others preferring to remain in the background until the development of the meeting between the tribes should occur.

"What, in natur', does all this mean?" exclaimed old Holmes, as we approached him, reining in his horse, for the purposes of a conference. "Is the governor sending out ra-al Injins ag'in' us, in order to favour the landlords?".

This was taking a harsh and most uncharitable view of the course of the governor, for an anti-renter; but that functionary having made the capital blunder of serving, altogether, neither "God nor Mammon" in this great question, must expect to take it right and left, as neither God nor Mammon will be very likely to approve of his course.

"Vell, I don't know," was my uncle's answer. "Dese ist ra-al red-men, und dem younder ist ra-al Injins, dat's all. What might bring dese warriors here, joost now, you must ask of demselves, if you wants to l'arn."

"There can be no harm in asking; I 'm no way skeary about redskins, having seen 'em often, and my father fit 'em in his day, as I've heern him tell. Sago, Sago."

"Sago," answered Prairiefire, with his customary courtesy.

"Where, in natur', do you red-men all come *from*, and where *can* ye be goin'?"

It was apparent that Holmes belonged to a school that never hesitated about putting any question; and that would have an answer, if an answer was to be got. The old chief had probably met with such pale-faces before, the untrained American being certainly among the most diligent of all the human beings of that class. But, on the other hand, the red-man regards the indulgence of a too eager curiosity as womanish, and unworthy of the self-command and dignity of a warrior. The betraying of surprise, and the indulgence of a curiosity fit only for squaws, were two things that Prairiefire had doubtless been early told were unworthy of his sex; for to some such in-and-in breeding alone could be referred the explanation of the circumstance that neither Holmes' manner, address, nor language, caused in him the least expression of emotion. He answered the questions, however, and that with a coldness that seemed of proof.

"Come from setting sun—been to see Great

Father, at Washington—go home," was the sententious reply.

"But, how came ye to pass by Ravensnest? —I'm afeard the governor, and them chaps at Albany, must have a hand in this, Shabbakuk?"

What Shabbakuk thought of the "governor, and them chaps at Albany" is not known, as he did not see fit to make any reply. His ordinary propensity to meddle was probably awed by the appearance of these real Redskins.

"I say, *why* do ye come this-a-way?" Holmes continued, repeating his question. "If you've been to Washington, and found him to hum (Anglice, 'at home'), why didn't ye go back by the way ye come?"

"Come here to find Injin; got no Injin here, eh?"

"Injin? why, of one sort we've got more of the critturs than a body can very well get along with. Of what colour be the Injins you want to find?—Be they of the pale-face natur', or be they red like yourselves?"

"Want to find red-man. He ole, now; like top of dead hemlock, wind blow t'rough his branches till leaf all fall off."

"By George, Hugh," whispered my uncle,

" these red-skins are in search of old Susquesus?" Then entirely forgetting the necessity of maintaining his broken English in the presence of his two Ravensnest listeners, Shabbakuk Tubbs, in particular, he turned, somewhat inconsiderately for one of his years, to the Prairiefire, and hastily remarked—

"I can help you in your search. You are looking for a warrior of the Onondagoes; one who left his tribe a hundred summers ago, a red-man of great renown for finding his path in the forest, and who would never taste fire-water. His name is Susquesus."

Until this moment, the only white man who was in company with this strange party—strange at least in our portion of the State of New York, though common enough, perhaps, on the great thoroughfares of the country—had been silent. This man was an ordinary interpreter, who had been sent with the party in case of necessity; but being little more acquainted with the ways of civilization than those whom he was to guide, he had prudently held his tongue until he saw that he might be of some use. We afterwards learned that the sub-agent who had accompanied the chiefs to Washington, had profited by the wish of the Indians to pay their

passing homage to the "Withered Hemlock, that still stands," as they poetically called Susquesus in their own dialects—for Indians of several tribes were present—to pay a visit to his own relatives in Massachusetts, his presence not being deemed necessary in such a purely pious pilgrimage.

"You're right," observed the interpreter. "These chiefs have not come to look up any *tribe*, but there are two of the ancient Onondagoes among them, and their traditions tell of a chief, called Susquesus, that has outlived everything but tradition; who left his own people long, long ago, and who left a great name behind him for vartue, and that is a thing a red-skin never forgets."

"And all these warriors have come fifty miles out of their way, to pay this homage to Susquesus?"

"Such has been their wish, and I asked permission of the Bureau at Washington, to permit them to come. It costs Uncle Sam $50 or a $100 more than it otherwise might, but such a visit will do all the warriors of the West a million of dollars of good; no men honour right and justice more than red-skins, though it's in their own fashion."

"I am sure Uncle Sam has acted no more than righteously, as I hope he always may act as respects these people. Susquesus is an old friend of mine, and I will lead you to him."

"And who in natur' be *you?*" demanded Holmes, his curiosity starting off on a new track.

"Who am I?—You shall know who I am," answered uncle Ro, removing his wig, an action that I imitated on the spot,—"I am Roger Littlepage, the late trustee of this estate, and this is Hugh Littlepage, its owner." Old Holmes was good pluck in most matters; of far better stuff at the bottom, than the sneaking, snivelling, prating demagogue at his side; but by this discovery he was dumb-founded! He looked at my uncle, then he looked at me; after which, he fastened a distressed and inquiring gaze on Shabbakuk. As for the Indians, notwithstanding their habitual self-command, a common "hugh!" was uttered among them, when they saw two men, as it might be, thus scalping themselves. Uncle Ro was excited, and his manner was, in the least degree, theatrical, as with one hand he removed his cap, and with the other his wig; holding the last, with an extended arm, in the direction of the Indians.

As a red-man is rarely guilty of any act of rudeness, unless he mean to play the brute in good earnest, it is possible that the Chippewa towards whom the hand which held the wig was extended, mistook the attitude for an invitation to examine that curious article, for himself. It is certain he gently forced it from my uncle's grasp, and, in the twinkling of an eye, all the savages were gathered round it, uttering many, but low and guarded expressions of surprise. Those men were all chiefs, and they restrained their astonishment at this point. Had there been any of the ignoble vulgar among them, there is little doubt that the wig would have passed from hand to hand, and been fitted to a dozen heads, already shaved to receive it.

CHAPTER VIII.

"The Gordon is gude in a hurry,
An' Campbell is steel to the bane;
An' Grant, an' Mackenzie, an' Murray,
An' Camgron will truckle to nane."

Hoga.

THE interruption of this scene came from old Holmes, who cried to his companion, on the high key in which it was usual for him to speak:—

"This is downright bad, Shabbakuk—we'll never get our leases a'ter this!".

"Nobody can say"—answered Tubbs, giving a loud hem, as if determined to brazen the matter out. "Maybe the gentleman will be glad to compromise the matter. It's ag'in law, I° believe, for any one to appear on the highway disguised—and both the 'Squire Littlepages, you'll notice, neighbour Holmes, be in the very

middle of the road, and both was disguised, only a minute ago."

"That's true.—D'ye think anything can be got out o' that? I want profitable proceedin's."

Shabbakuk gave another hem, looked behind him, as if to ascertain what had become of the Injins, for he clearly did not fancy the real "article" before him, and then he answered:

"We may get our farms, neighbour Holmes, if you'll agree, as I'm willin' to do, to be reasonable about this matter, so long as 'Squire Littlepage wishes to hearken to his own interests."

My uncle did not deign to make any answer, but, knowing we had done nothing to bring us within the view of the late statute, he turned towards the Indians, renewing his offer to them to be their guide.

"The chiefs want very much to know who you are, and how you two came by double scalps," said the interpreter, smiling like one who understood, for his own part, the nature of a wig very well.

"Tell them that this young gentleman is Hugh Littlepage, and that I am his uncle. Hugh Littlepage is the owner of the land that you see on every side of you."

The answer was communicated, and we

waited for its effect on the Indians. To our surprise, several of them soon gathered around, evidently regarding us both with interest and respect.

"The claims of a landlord seem to be better understood among these untutored savages, than among your own tenants, Hugh," said my uncle. "But there goes old Holmes, the inbred rogue, and his friend, Shabbakuk, back to the woods; we may have an affair on hand with *his* Injins."

"I think not, sir. It does not appear to me that there is valour enough in that tribe, to face this. In general, the white man is fully a match for the redskin; but it may be doubted whether chiefs like these would not prove too much for twice their number of varlets, of the breed of yonder skulking scoundrels."

"Why do the chiefs manifest so much interest in us?" asked my uncle of the interpreter. "Is it possible that they pay so much respect to us, on account of our connexion with this estate?"

"Not at all—not at all. They know the difference between a chief and a common man well enough, it is true," was the answer; "and twenty times, as we have come down

through the country, have they expressed their surprise to me, that so many common men should be chiefs, among the pale-faces; but they care nothing for riches. He is the greatest man among them, who is best on a war path, and at a council-fire; though they *do* honour them that has had great and useful ancestors."

"But they seem to betray some unusual and extraordinary interest in us, too; perhaps they are surprised at seeing gentlemen in such dresses?"

"Lord, sir, what do men care for dresses, that are used to see the heads of factories and forts, half the time dressed in skins! They know that there be holidays and workin'-days; times for every-day wear, and times for feathers and paint. No—no—they look at you both with so much interest, on account of their traditions."

"Their traditions! What can these have to do with us? We have never had anything to with Indians."

"That's true of you, and may be true of your fathers; but it's not true of some of your ancestors. Yesterday, after we had got to our night's stopping-place, two of the chiefs, this smallish man with the double plate on his

breast, and that elderly warrior, who has been once scalped, as you can see by his crown, began to tell of some of the treacheries of their own tribe, which was once a Canada people. The elderly chief related the adventures of a war-path, that led out of Canada, across the large waters, down to a settlement where they expected to get a great many scalps, but where in the end they lost more scalps than they found; and where they met Susquesus, the upright Onondago, as they call him in that tongue, as well as the Yengeese owner of the land, at this very spot, whom they called by a name something like your own, who was a warrior of great courage and skill by their traditions. They suppose you to be the descendants of the last, and honour you accordingly; that's all."

"And, is it possible that these untutored beings have traditions as reliable as this?"

"Lord, if you could hear what they say among themselves, about the lies that are read to them out of the pale-face prints, you would l'arn how much store they set by truth! In my day, I have travelled through a hundred miles of wilderness, by a path that was no better, nor any worse, than an Indian tradition of its

manner of running; and a tradition that must have been, at least, a hundred summers old. They know all about your forefathers, and they know something about you, too, if you be the gentleman that finds the upright Onondago, or the Withered Hemlock, in his old age, with a wigwam, and keeps it filled with food and fuel."

"Is this possible! And all this is spoken of, and known among the savages of the Far West?"

"If you call these chiefs, savages," returned the interpreter, a little offended at hearing such a term applied to his best friends and constant associates. "To be sure they have their ways, and so have the pale-faces; but Injin ways be not so very savage, when a body gets a little used to them. Now, I remember it was a long time before I could get reconciled to seeing a warrior scalp his enemy; but as I reasoned on it, and entered into the spirit of the practice, I began to feel it was all right."

I was walking just in front of my uncle, for we were in motion again on our way to the wood, but could not help turning and saying to him with a smile—

"So it would seem that this matter of the

'spirit' is to be found in other places besides the legislature. There is the 'spirit of scalping,' as well as the 'spirit of the institutions!'"

"Ay, Hugh, and the 'spirit of fleecing,' as a consequence of what is profanely termed the last. But it may be well to go no nearer to the wood than this spot. The Injins I have told you of are in these bushes in front, and they are armed; I leave you to communicate with them in any manner you please. They are about twenty in number."

The interpreter informed his chiefs of what had been said, who spoke together in earnest consultation for a moment. Then Prairiefire, himself, plucked a branch off the nearest bush, and, holding it up, he advanced close to the cover, and called out aloud, in some one, or in many of the different dialects with which he was acquainted. I saw by the moving of their branches that men were in the bushes; but no answer of any sort was made. There was one savage in our band, who betrayed manifest impatience at these proceedings. He was a large, athletic Iowa chief, called in English Flinty-heart, and, as we subsequently learned, of great renown for martial exploits. It was always difficult to hold him in, when there was a pro-

spect of scalps; and he was now less restrained than common, from the circumstance of his having no superior of his own particular tribe present. After Prairiefire had called two or three times in vain to the party in the cover, Flintyheart stepped out, spoke a few words with energy and spirit, terminating his appeal by a most effective, not to say appalling, whoop. That sound was echoed back by most of the band, when they all broke off, right and left, stealing more like snakes than bipeds to the fences, under cover of which they glanced forward to the wood, in which every man of them buried himself, in the twinkling of an eye. In vain had the interpreter called to them, to remind them where they were, and to tell them that they might displease their Great Father at Washington; and Prairiefire stood his ground, exposed to any shot the supposed foe might send at him. On they went, like so many hounds that have struck a scent too strong to be held in restraint by any whipper-in.

"They expect to find Injins," said the interpreter, in a sort of despair, "and there's no holdin' 'em back. There can be no enemies of their'n down here-a-way, and the agent will be awfully angry if blood is drawn; though I

shouldn't mind it a bit, if the party was some of them scoundrels, the Sauks and Foxes, whom it's often a marcy to kill. It's different down here, however, and I must say, I wish this hadn't happened."

My uncle and myself just waited long enough to hear this, when we rushed forward, along the highway, and entered the wood, joined by Prairiefire, who, fancying by our movement that all was right, now raised such a whoop himself, as to demonstrate it was not for want of "knowing how" that he had hitherto been silent. The road made a curve at the very point where it penetrated the forest, and being fringed with the bushes already mentioned, the two circumstances shut out the view of what was passing behind the scenes, until we reached the turn, where a common halt of the wagons had been made, when the whole view burst upon us at once in all its magnificence.

A rout of a "grand army" could scarcely have been more picturesque! The road was lined with vehicles, in full retreat, to use a military term, or, to speak in the more common parlance, scampering off. Every whip was in active use, every horse was on the run, whilst half the faces were turned behind their owners,

the women sending back screams to the whoops of the savages. As for the Injins, they had instinctively abandoned the woods, and poured down into the highway, speed like theirs demanding open ground for its finest display. Some had leaped into wagons, piling themselves up among those virtuous wives and daughters of that portion of the honest yeomanry who had collected to devise the means of cheating me out of my property. But, why dwell on this scene, since the exploits of these Injins, for the last six years, have amply proved that the only thing in which they excel is, in running away. They are heroes when a dozen can get round a single man, to tar and feather him; valiant, as a hundred against five or six, and occasionally murderers, when each victim can be destroyed by five or six bullets, to make sure of him. The very cowardice of the scoundrels should render them loathsome to the whole community; the dog that has spirit only to hunt in packs being cur at the bottom.

I must add one other object to the view, however. Holmes and Shabbakuk brought up the rear, and both were flogging their devoted beast as if his employers—I dare not call them "masters," as I might be accused of aristocracy

for using so offensive a term in this age of common-sense liberty, while "employers" is a very significant expression for the particular occasion—as if his "employers," then, had left something behind them at "Little Neest," and were hurrying back to obtain it before it fell into other hands. Old Holmes kept looking behind, as if chased by the covenants of forty leases, while the "Spirit of the Institutions," headed by two governors, and "the honourable gentleman from Albany," was in full pursuit. If the "Spirit of the Institutions" was really there, it was quite alone; for I looked in vain for the exhibition of any other spirit. In much less time than it has taken me to write this account, the road was cleared, leaving my uncle, myself, and Prairiefire, in quiet possession; the latter uttering a very significant "hugh!" as the last wagon went out of sight in a cloud of dust.

It was but a moment, however, before our own tribe, or *tribes* will be more accurate, came down upon us, collecting in the road at the very spot where we stood. The victory had been bloodless, but it was complete. Not only had the savage Indians completely routed the virtuous and much-oppressed-by-aristocracy

Injins, but they had captured two specimens of virtue and depression in the persons of as many of the band. So very significant and expressive was the manner of the captives, that Flintyheart, into whose hands they had fallen, not only seemed to hold their scalps in contempt, but actually had disdained to disarm them. There they stood, bundles of calico, resembling children in swaddling-clothes, with nothing partaking of that natural freedom of which their party love to boast, but their legs, which were left at perfect liberty, by way of a *dernier ressort*. My uncle now assumed a little authority, and commanded these fellows to take off their disguises. He might as well have ordered one of the oaks, or maples, to lay down its leaves before the season came round; for neither would obey.

The interpreter, however whose name was Manytongues, rendered into English from the Indian dialects, was a man of surprisingly few words, considering his calling, on an occasion like this. Walking up to one of the prisoners, he first disarmed him, and then removed his calico hood, exposing the discomfited countenance of Brigham, Tom Miller's envious labourer. The "hughs!" that escaped the

Indians were very expressive, on finding that not only did a pale-face countenance appear from beneath the covering, but one that might be said to be somewhat paler than common. Manytongues had a good deal of frontier waggery about him, and by this time he began to comprehend how the land lay. Passing his hand over Josh's head, he coolly remarked—

"That scalp would be thought more of, in Iowa, than it's ra-ally worth, I'm thinking, if truth was said. But let us see who we have here."

Suiting the action to the words, as it is termed, the interpreter laid hold of the hood of the other captive, but did not succeed in removing it without a sharp struggle. He effected his purpose, assisted by two of the younger chiefs, who stepped forward to aid him. I anticipated the result, for I had early recognised the goar; but great was the surprise of my uncle when he saw Seneca Newcome's well-known face developed by the change!

Seneca—or, it might be better now to use his own favourite orthoepy, and call him Sene*ky*, at once, for he had a particularly sneaking look as he emerged from under the calico, and this would be suiting the sound to appearances—Seneky, then, was in a "mingled tumult," as

it is called, of rage and shame. The first predominated, however, and, as is only too common in cases of military disasters, instead of attributing his capture to circumstances, the prowess of his enemies, or any fault of his own, he sought to mitigate his own disgrace by heaping disgrace on his comrade. Indeed, the manner in which these men went at each other, as soon as unsacked, reminded me of two game cocks that are let out of their bags within three feet of each other, with this exception—neither crowed.

"This is all your fault, you cowardly dog," said Seneky, almost fiercely, for shame had filled his face with blood. "Had you kept on your feet, and not run me down, in your haste to get off, I might have retreated, and got clear with the rest of them."

This assault was too much for Joshua, who gained spirit to answer by its rudeness and violence, not to say injustice; for, as we afterwards ascertained, Newcome had actually fallen in his eagerness to retreat; and Brigham, so far from being the cause of his coming down, had only prevented his getting up, by falling on top of him. In this prostrate condition they had further fallen into the hands of their enemies.

"I want nothin' from you, 'Squire Newcome," answered Joshua, quite decidedly as to tone and manner; "*your* character is well known, all up and down the country."

"What of my character?—What have *you* got to say ag'in' me or my character?" demanded the attorney at law, in a tone of high defiance. "I want to see the man who can say anything ag'in' my character."

This was pretty well, considering that the fellow had actually been detected in the commission of a felony; though I suppose that difficulty would have been gotten over, in a moral sense, by the claim of being taken while struggling in defence of human rights, and the "spirit of the institutions." The defiance was too much for Brigham's patience, and being fully assured, by this time, that he was not in much danger of being scalped, he turned upon Seneca, and cried, with something more than spirit, with downright rancour—

"You're a pretty fr'ind of the poor man, and of the people, if truth must be said, an't you? Everybody in the county that's in want of money knows what *you* be, you d——d shaver."

As the last words came out, Seneky's fist went in upon Brigham's nose, causing the blood

to flow freely. My uncle Ro now thought it time to interfere, and he rebuked the irritated lawyer with dignity.

"Why did he call me a d——d shaver, then?" retorted Seneky, still angry and red. "I'll stand *that* from no man."

"Why, what harm can there be in such a charge, Mr. Newcome? You are a member of the bar, and ought to understand the laws of your country, and cannot stand in need of being told that it has been decided by the highest tribunal of your State that it is no reproach to be called a shaver! Some of the honourable members of that learned body, indeed, seem to think, on the contrary, that it is matter of commendation and congratulation. I am ashamed of you, Mr. Newcome—I'm quite ashamed of you."

Seneky muttered something, in which I fancied I understood the words, "the Court of Errors be d——d," or "the Court of Errors" might go to some very bad place, which I will not name; but I will not take on myself that any man of decency could really use such irreverent language about a body so truly eminent, though a person in a passion is sometimes disposed to forget propriety. My uncle now

thought it time to put an end to this scene; and, without deigning to enter into any explanations, he signified to Manytongues his readiness to lead his chiefs to the point where they desired to go.

"As to these two Injins," he added, "their capture will do us no honour; and now we know who they are, they can be taken at any time by the deputy-sheriffs or constables. It is hardly worth while to encumber your march with such fellows."

The chiefs assented to this proposal, too, and we quitted the woods in a body, leaving Seneky and Joshua on the ground. As we subsequently learned, our backs were no sooner turned, than the last pitched into the first, and pounded him not only until he owned he was "a shaver," but that he was "a d——d shaver" in the bargain. Such was the man, and such the class, that the deluded anti-renters of New York wish to substitute, in a social sense, for the ancient landlords of the country! A pretty top-sheaf they would make to the stack of the community, and admirably would the grain be kept that was protected by their covering! One would like to see fellows of this moral calibre interpreting *their* covenants; and it would be a

useful, though a painful lesson, to see the change effected for a twelvemonth, in order to ascertain, after things had got back into the old natural channel, how many would *then* wish to "return, like the dog to his vomit, or the sow to her wallowing in the mire."

After giving some directions to Manytongues, my uncle and I got into our wagon and drove up the road, leaving the Indians to follow. The rendezvous was at the Nest, whither we had now determined to proceed at once, and assume our proper characters. In passing the rectory we found time to stop and run in, to inquire after the welfare of Mr. and Miss Warren. Great was my joy at learning they had gone on to the Nest, where they were all to dine. This intelligence did not tend to lessen the speed of Miller's horse, or my horse, it would be better to say, for I am the real owner of everything on the Nest Farm, and shall probably so remain, unless the "spirit of the Institutions" gets at my property there, as well as in other places. In the course of half an hour we drove on the lawn, and stopped at the door. It will be recollected that the Indians had our wigs, which had been left by my uncle and myself in their hands, as things of no further use to us. Notwith-

standing our dresses, the instant we presented ourselves without these instruments of disguise we were recognised, and the cry went through the house and grounds that "Mr. Hugh had come home!" I confess I was touched with some signs of interest and feeling that escaped the domestics, as well as those who belonged out of doors, when they saw me again standing before them in health, if not in good looks. My uncle, too, was welcome; and there were a few minutes during which I forgot all my grounds for vexation, and was truly happy.

Although my grandmother, and sister, and Mary Warren, all knew what the cry of "Mr. Hugh has got home" meant, it brought everybody out upon the piazza. Mr. Warren had related the events of the day, as far as he was acquainted with them; but even those who were in the secret were surprised at our thus returning unwigged, and in our proper characters. As for myself, I could not but note the manner in which the four girls came out to meet me. Martha flew into my embrace, cast her arms around my neck, kissing me six or eight times without stopping. Then Miss Coldbrooke came next, with Anne Marston leaning on her arm,

both smiling, though greatly surprised, and both bright, and pretty, and lady-like. They were glad to see me, and met my salutations frankly and like old friends; though I could see they did not fancy my dress in the least. Mary Warren was behind them all, smiling, blushing and shy; but it did not require two looks from me to make certain that *her* welcome was as sincere as that of my older friends. Mr. Warren was glad to have it in his power to greet us openly, and to form an acquaintance with those, to whose return he had now been looking with anxiety and hope, for three or four years.

A few minutes sufficed for the necessary explanations, a part of which, indeed, had already been made by those who were previously in the secret; when my dear grandmother and Patt insisted on our going up to our old rooms, and of dressing ourselves in attire more suitable to our stations. A plenty of summer clothes had been left behind us, and our wardrobes had been examined that morning in anticipation of our soon having need of them; so that no great time was necessary to make the change. I was a little fuller than when I left home, but the clothes, being loose, there was no difficulty in

equipping myself. I found a handsome blue dress coat, that did very well, and vests and pantaloons, *ad libitum.* Clothing is so much cheaper in Europe than at home, that Americans who are well supplied, do not often carry much with them when they go abroad; and this had been a rule with my uncle all his life. Each of us, moreover, habitually kept a supply of country attire at the Nest, which we did not think of removing. In consequence of these little domestic circumstances, as has been said, there was no want of the means of putting my uncle and myself on a level with others of our class, as respects outward appearance, in that retired part of the country, at least.

The apartments of my uncle and myself were quite near each other, in the north wing of the house; or that which looked in the direction of a part of the meadows under the cliff, the wooded ravine, and the wigwam, or cabin, of the "Upright Onondago." The last was very plainly in view, from the window of my dressing-room; and I was standing at the latter, contemplating the figures of the two old fellows, as they sat basking in the sun, as was their practice of an afternoon, when a tap at the

door proved to be the announcement of the entrance of John.

"Well, John, my good fellow," I said, laughingly; "I find a wig makes a great difference with your means of recognising an old friend. I must thank you, nevertheless, for the good treatment you gave me in my character of a music-grinder."

"I am sure, Mr. Hugh, you are heartily welcome to my services, come as you may to ask them. It was a most surprisingest deception, sir, as I shall ever hadmit; but I thought the whole time you wasn't exactly what you seemed to be, as I told Kitty as soon as I went down stairs: 'Kitty,' says I, 'them two pedlars is just the two genteelest pedlars as hever I see in this country, and I shouldn't wonder if they had known better days.' But, now you have been to see the hanti-renters with your own eyes, Mr. Hugh, what do you think of them, if I may be so bold as to ask the question?"

"Very much as I thought, before I had been to see them. They are a set of fellows who are canting about liberty, at the very moment when they are doing all they can to discredit its laws, and who mistake selfishness for pa-

triotism; just as their backers in the State government are doing, by using the same cant, when their object is nothing but votes. If no tenant had a vote, this question would never have been raised, or dreamt of—but I see those two old fellows, Jaaf and Sus, seem to enjoy themselves still."

"Indeed, they do, sir, in the most surprisingest manner! They was both antiquities, as we says in Hengland, when I came to this country, sir,—and that was before you was born, Mr. Hugh—an age agone. But there they sits, sir, day in and day out, looking like monumentals of past times. The nigger"—John had been long enough in the country to catch the vernacular—"The nigger grows uglier and uglier every year, and that is most of a change I can see in *him*; while I do think, sir, that the Indian grows 'andsomer and 'andsomer. He's the 'andsomest old gentleman, sir, as I knows of, far and near!"

"Old *gentleman!*" What an expressive term that was in this case! No human being would ever think of calling Jaaf an "old gentleman," even in these "aristocratic" days, when "gentlemen" are plentier than blackberries; while any one might feel disposed thus to describe

Susquesus. The Onondago *was* a gentleman, in the best meaning of the word; though he may, and certainly did, want a great deal in the way of mere conventional usages. As for John, he never would have used the word to me, except in a case in which he felt the party had a claim to the appellation.

"Susquesus is a magnificent sight, with his grey or white head, fiery eyes, composed features, and impressive air," I answered; "and Jaaf is no beauty. How do the old men get on together?"

"Why, sir, they quarrel a good deal—that is, the nigger quarrels; though the Indian is too much above him to mind what he says. Nor will I say that Yop actually quarrels, sir, for he has the greatest possible regard for his friend; but he aggravates in the most surprisingist manner—just like a nigger, howsever, I do suppose."

"They have wanted for nothing, I trust, during my absence. Their table and other comforts have been seen to carefully, I hope?"

"No fear of that, sir, so long as Mrs. Littlepage lives! She has the affection of a child for the old men, and has everything provided for

them that they can possibly want. Betty Smith, sir—you remember Betty, the widow of the old coachman, that died when you was at college, sir—well, Betty has done nothing, these four years, but look after them two old men. She keeps everything tidy in their hut, and washes it out twice a week, and washes their clothes for them, and darns, and sews, and cooks, and looks after all their comforts. She lives hard by, in the other cottage, sir, and has everything handy."

"I am glad of that. Does either of the old men ever stray over as far as the Nest House now, John? Before I went abroad, we had a visit from each, daily."

"That custom has fallen away a little, sir; though the nigger comes much the oftenest. He is sure to be here once or twice a week, in good weather. Then he walks into the kitchen, where he will sit sometimes for a whole morning, telling the hardest stories, sir—ha, ha, ha! —yes, sir, just the hardest stories one ever heard!"

"Why, what can he have to say of that nature, that it seems to amuse you so?"

"According to his notion, sir, everything in the country is falling away, and is inferior like

to what it may have been in his young days. The turkeys ar'n't so large, sir; and the fowls is poorer, sir; and the mutton isn't so fat, sir; and sich sort of enormities."

Here John laughed very heartily, though it was plain enough he did not much fancy the comparisons.

"And Susquesus," I said, "he does not share in his friend's criticisms?"

"Sus never enters the kitchen, sir, at all. He knows that all the quality and upper class come to the great door of the house, and is too much of a gentleman to come in at any other entrance. No, sir, I never saw Sus in the kitchen or hoffices, at all; nor does Mrs. Littlepage 'ave his table set anywhere but in the hupper rooms, or on the piazza, when she wishes to treat him to anything nice. The old gentleman has what he calls his traditions, sir, and can tell a great many stories of old times; but they ar'n't about turkeys, and 'orses, and garden-stuff, and such things as Yop dwells on so much, and so uncomfortably."

I now dismissed John, after again thanking him for his civilities to one of my late appearance, and joined my uncle. When we entered the little drawing-room, where the whole party

was waiting to meet us, previously to going to the table, a common exclamation of pleasure escaped them all. Martha again kissed me, declaring I was now Hugh; that I looked as she had expected to see Hugh; that she would now know me for Hugh, and many other similar things; while my dear grandmother stood and parted my hair, and gazed into my face with tears in her eyes, for I reminded her of her first-born, who had died so young! As for the other ladies, the two heiress-wards of Uncle Ro seemed smiling and friendly, and willing to renew our ancient amicable relations; but Mary Warren still kept herself in the back-ground, though I thought by her modest and half-averted eye, and flushed cheeks, that she sympathized as deeply in her friend Patt's present happiness as any of the others; possibly more deeply.

Before we went to the table, I sent a servant to the top of the house, with orders to look down the road, in order to ascertain when my red friends might be expected. This man reported that they were advancing along the highway, and would probably reach the door in the course of half an hour. They had stopped; and he thought that he could perceive, by means

of his glass, that they were painting their faces, and otherwise arranging their toilets, in preparation for the anticipated interview. On receiving this information we took our seats at table, expecting to be ready to receive the chiefs, as soon as they should arrive.

Ours was a happy dinner. For the moment, the condition of the country and the schemes of my tenants were forgotten, and we chatted of those nearer interests and feelings that naturally presented themselves to our minds at such a time. At length dear grandmother pleasantly remarked—

"You must have an instinct for the discovery of discretion, Hugh, for no one could have made a better choice of a confidant than you did, while going to the village, this morning."

Mary blushed like an Italian sky at eventide, and looked down, to conceal her confusion.

"I do not know whether it was discretion or vanity, grandmother," was my answer, "for I am conscious of feeling an unconquerable reluctance to passing for a common music-grinder in Miss Warren's eyes."

"Nay, Hugh," put in the saucy Patt, "I had told you before that you passed for a very *uncommon* music-grinder in her eyes. As for the

grinding, she said but little; for it was of the flute, and of the manner in which it was played, that Miss Warren spoke the most eloquently."

The "Martha!" of Mary Warren, lowly, but half-reproachfully uttered, showed that the charming girl was beginning to be really distressed, and my observant parent changed the discourse by a gentle and adroit expedient; such as a woman alone knows thoroughly how to put in practice. It was simply handing Mr. Warren a plate of greengages; but the act was so performed as to change the discourse.

During the whole of that meal I felt certain there was a secret, mysterious communication between me and Mary Warren, which, while it probably did escape the notice of others, was perfectly evident to ourselves. This fact I *felt* to be true; while there was a consciousness betrayed in Mary's blushes, and even in her averted eyes, that I found extremely eloquent on the same subject.

CHAPTER IX.

"With look, like patient Job's, eschewing evil;
With motions graceful as a bird's in air;
Thou art, in sober truth, the veriest devil
That e'er clinched fingers in a captive's hair."

RED JACKET.

ALTHOUGH an immense progress has been made in liberating this country from the domination of England, in the way of opinion and usages, a good deal remains to be done yet. Still, he who can look back forty years, must see the great changes that have occurred in very many things; and it is to be hoped that he who lives forty years hence, will find very few remaining that have no better reasons for their existence among ourselves than the example of a people so remote, with a different climate, different social organization, and different wants. I am for no more condemning a usage, however, simply because it is English, than I am for ap-

proving it, simply because it is English. I wish everything to stand on its own merits, and feel certain that no nation ever can become great, in the higher signification of the term, until it ceases to imitate, because it is imitation of a certain fixed model. One of the very greatest evils of this imitative spirit is even now developing itself in what is called the "progress" of the country, which is assailing principles that are as old as the existence of man, and which may almost be said to be eternal as social truths, at the very moment that notions derived from our ancestors are submitted to in the highest places, the Senate of the United States for example, that are founded in facts which not only have no existence among ourselves, but which are positively antagonist to such as have. So much easier is it to join in the hurrah! of a "progress," than to ascertain whether it is making in the right direction, or whether it be progress at all. But, to return from things of moment to those of less concern.

Among other customs to be condemned that we have derived from England, is the practice of the men sitting at table after the women have left it. Much as I may wish to see this every-way offensive custom done away with,

and the more polished and humanizing usage of all the rest of christendom adopted in its stead, I should feel ashamed at finding, as I make no doubt I should find it, that our custom would be abandoned within a twelvemonth after it might be understood it was abandoned in England. My uncle had long endeavoured to introduce into our own immediate circle the practice of retaining the ladies at table for a reasonable time, and of then quitting it with them at the expiration of that time; but it is hard to "kick against the pricks." Men who fancy it "society" to meet at each other's houses to drink wine, and taste wine, and talk about wine, and to outdo each other in giving their guests the most costly wines, are not to be diverted easily from their objects. The hard-drinking days are past, but the hard "talking days" are in their vigour. If it could be understood, generally, that even in England it is deemed vulgar to descant on the liquor that is put upon the table, perhaps we might get rid of the practice too. Vulgar in England! It is even deemed vulgar here, by the right sort, as I am ready to maintain, and indeed know of my own observation. That one or two friends who are participating in the benefits of some particularly benevolent

bottle, should say a word in commendation of its merits, is natural enough, and well enough; no one can reasonably find any fault with such a sign of grateful feeling; but I know of nothing more revolting than to see twenty grave faces arrayed round a table, employed as so many tasters at a Rhenish wine sale, while the cheeks of their host look like those of Boreas, owing to the process of sucking syphons.

When my dear grandmother rose, imitated by the four bright-faced girls, who did as she set the example, and said, as was customary with the old school, "Well, gentlemen, I leave you to your wine; but you will recollect that you will be most welcome guests in the drawing-room," my uncle caught her hand, and insisted she should not quit us. There was something exceedingly touching, to my eyes, in the sort of intercourse, and in the affection which existed between my uncle Ro and his mother. A bachelor himself, while she was a widow, they were particularly fond of each other; and many is the time that I have seen him go up to her, when we were alone, and pat her cheeks, and then kiss them, as one might do to a much-beloved sister. My grandmother

always received these little liberties with perfect good-humour, and with evident affection. In her turn, I have frequently known her to approach "Roger," as she always called him, and kiss his bald head, in a way that denoted she vividly remembered the time when he was an infant in her arms. On this occasion she yielded to his request, and resumed her seat, the girls imitating her, nothing loth, as they had done in rising. The conversation then, naturally enough, reverted to the state of the country.

"It has much surprised me, that the men in authority among us have confined all their remarks and statements to the facts of the Rensselaer and Livingston estates," observed my grandmother, "when there are difficulties existing in so many others."

"The explanation is very simple, my good mother," answered uncle Ro. "The Rensselaer estates have the quarter-sales, and chickens, and days' works; and there is much of the *ad captandum* argument about such things, that does very well to work up for political effect; whereas, on the other estates, these great auxiliaries must be laid aside. It is just as certain, as it is that the sun has risen this day,

that an extensive and concerted plan exists to transfer the freehold rights of the landlords, on nearly every property in the State, to the tenants; and that, too, on conditions unjustly favourable to the last; but you will find nothing of the sort in the messages of governors, or speeches of legislators, who seem to think all is said, when they have dwelt on the expediency of appeasing the complaints of the tenants, as a high political duty, without stopping to inquire whether those complaints are founded in right or not. The injury that will be done to the republic, by showing men how much can be effected by clamour, is of itself incalculable. It would take a generation to do away the evil consequences of the example, were the anti-rent combination to be utterly defeated to-morrow."

"I find that the general argument against the landlords is a want of title, in those cases in which nothing better can be found," observed Mr. Warren. "The lecturer, to-day, seemed to condemn any title that was derived from the king, as defeated by the conquest over that monarch, by the war of the revolution."

"A most charming consummation that would have been for the heroic deeds of the Littlepages! There were my father, grandfather,

and great-grandfather, all in arms, in that war; the two first as general officers, and the last as a major; and the result of all their hardships and dangers is to be to rob themselves of their own property! I am aware that this silly pretence has been urged, even in a court of justice; but folly, and wrong, and madness, are not yet quite ripe enough among us, to carry such a doctrine down. As 'coming events cast their shadows before,' it is possible we are to take this very movement, however, as the dawn of the approaching day of American reason, and not as a twilight left by the departed rays of a sun of a period of mental darkness."

"You surely do not apprehend, uncle Ro, that these people can really get Hugh's lands away from him!" exclaimed Patt, reddening with anxiety and anger.

"No one can say, my dear; for, certainly, no one is safe when opinions and acts, like those which have been circulated and attempted among us of late years, can be acted on without awakening very general indignation. Look to the moneyed classes at this very moment; agonized and excited on the subject of a war about Oregon—a thing very little likely

to occur, though certainly possible; while they manifest the utmost indifference to this anti-rentism, though the positive existence of everything connected with just social organization is directly involved in its fate. One is a bare possibility, but it convulses the class I have named; while the other is connected with the existence of civilized society itself; yet it has ceased to attract attention, and is nearly forgotten! Every man in the community, whose means raise him at all above the common level, has a direct interest in facing this danger, and in endeavouring to put it down; but scarcely any one appears to be conscious of the importance of the crisis. We have only one or two more steps to make, in order to become like Turkey; a country in which the wealthy are obliged to conceal their means, in order to protect it from the grasp of the government; but no one seems to care at all about it!"

"Some recent travellers among us have said that we have nearly reached that pass already, as our rich affect great simplicity and plainness in public, while they fill their houses in private with all the usual evidences of wealth and luxury. I think de Tocqueville, among others, makes that remark."

"Ay, that is merely one of the ordinarily sagacious remarks of the European, who, by not understanding the American history, confounds causes and makes mistakes. The plainness of things in public is no more than an ancient habit of the country, while the elegance and luxury in private are a very simple and natural consequence of the tastes of women who live in a state of society in which they are limited to the very minimum of refined habits and intellectual pleasures. The writer who made this mistake is a very clever man, and has exceeding merit, considering his means of ascertaining truth; but he has made very many similar blunders."

"Nevertheless, Mr. Littlepage," resumed the rector, who was a gentleman, in all the senses of the word, and knew the world, and the best part of it, too, even while he had preserved an admirable simplicity of character, "changes *have* certainly taken place among us, of the nature alluded to by M. de Tocqueville."

"That is quite true, sir; but they have also taken place elsewhere. When I was a boy, I can well remember to have seen coaches-and-six in this country, and almost every man of fortune drove his coach-and-four; whereas, now,

such a thing is of the rarest occurrence possible. But the same is true all over Christendom; for, when I first went to Europe, coaches-and-six, with outriders, and all that sort of state, was an every-day thing; whereas, it is now never, or at least very seldom seen. Improved roads, steam-boats, and railroads, can produce such changes, without having recourse to the oppression of the masses."

"I am sure," put in Patt, laughing, "if publicity be what Mons. de Tocqueville requires, there is publicity enough in New York! All the new-fashioned houses are so constructed, with their low balconies and lower windows, that anybody can see in at their windows. If what I have read and heard of a Paris house be true, standing between *cour et jardin*, there is infinitely more of privacy there than here; and one might just as well say that the Parisians bury themselves behind *porte cochères*, and among trees, to escape the attacks of the Faubourg St. Antoine, as to say we retreat into our houses to be fine, lest the mobocracy would not tolerate us."

"The girl has profited by your letters, I see, Hugh," said my uncle, nodding his head in approbation; "and what is more, she makes a

suitable application of her tuition, or, rather, of yours. No, no, all that is a mistake; and, as Martha says, no houses are so much in the street as those of the new style in our own towns. It would be far more just to say that, instead of retiring within doors to be fine, as Patt calls it, unseen by envious neighbours, the Manhattanese, in particular, turn their dwellings wrong side out, lest their neighbours should take offence at not being permitted to see all that is going on within. But, neither is true. The house is the more showy because it is most under woman's control; and it would be just as near the truth to say that the reason why the American men appear abroad in plain blue, and black, and brown clothes, while their wives and daughters are at home in silks and satins—ay, even in modern brocades—is an apprehension of the masses, as to ascribe the plainness of street life, compared to that within doors, to the same cause. There is a good deal of difference between a *salon* in the Faubourg, or the Chaussée d'Autin, and even on the Boulevard des Italiens. But, John is craning with his neck, out there on the piazza, as if our red brethren were at hand."

So it was, in point of fact, and everybody

now rose from table, without ceremony, and went forth to meet our guests. We had barely time to reach the lawn, the ladies having run for their hats in the mean time, before Prairie-fire, Flintyheart, Manytongues, and all the rest of them, came up, on the sort of half trot that distinguishes an Indian's march.

Notwithstanding the change in our dresses, my uncle and myself were instantly recognised, and courteously saluted by the principal chiefs. Then our wigs were gravely offered to us, by two of the younger men; but we declined receiving them, begging the gentlemen who had them in keeping, to do us the honour to accept them, as tokens of our particular regard. This was done with great good will, and with a pleasure that was much too obvious to be concealed. Half an hour later, I observed that each of the young forest dandies had a wig on his otherwise naked head, with a peacock's feather stuck quite knowingly in the lank hair. The effect was somewhat ludicrous; particularly on the young ladies; but I saw that each of the warriors himself looked round, as if to ask for the admiration that he felt his appearance ought to awaken!

No sooner were the salutations exchanged,

than the red-men began to examine the house—the cliff on which it stood—the meadows beneath, and the surrounding ground. At first, we supposed that they were struck with the extent and solidity of the buildings, together with a certain air of finish and neatness, that is not everywhere seen in America, even in the vicinity of its better-class houses; but Many-tongues soon undeceived us. My uncle asked him, why all the red-men had broken off, and scattered themselves around the buildings, some looking here, others pointing there, and all manifestly earnest and much engaged with something; though it was not easy to understand what that something was; intimating his supposition that they might be struck with the buildings.

"Lord bless ye, no, sir," answered the interpreter; "they don't care a straw about the house, or any house. There's Flintyheart, in particular; he's a chief that you can no more move with riches, and large housen, and sich like matters, than you can make the Mississippi run up stream. When we went to Uncle Sam's house, at Washington, he scarce condescended to look at it; and the Capitol had no more effect on any on 'em, than if it had been a better

sort of wigwam; not so much, for that matter, as Injins be curious in wigwams. What's put 'em up, on a trail like, just now, is the knowledge that this is the spot where a battle was fit, something like ninety seasons ago, in which the Upright Onondago was consarned, as well as some of their own people on t'other side—that's what's put 'em in commotion."

"And why does Flintyheart talk to those around him with so much energy; and point to the flats, and the cliff, and the ravine yonder, that lies beyond the wigwam of Susquesus?"

"Ah! Is that, then, the wigwam of the Upright Onondago!" exclaimed the interpreter, betraying some such interest as one might manifest on unexpectedly being told that he saw Mount Vernon or Monticello, for the first time in his life. "Well, it's something to have seen *that;* though it will be more to see the man himself; for all the tribes on the upper prairies are full of his story and his behaviour. No Injin, since the time of Tamenund himself, has made as much talk, of late years, as Susquesus, the Upright Onondago, unless it might be Tecumthe, perhaps. But what occupies Flintyheart, just at this moment, is an account of the battle, in which his father's grandfather lost his

life, though he did not lose his scalp. That disgrace, he is now telling on 'em, he escaped, and glad enough is his descendant that it was so. It's no great matter to an Injin to be killed; but he'd rather escape losing his scalp, or being struck at all by the inimy, if it can possibly be made to turn out so. Now he is talking of some young pale-face that was killed, whom he calls Lover of Fun—and, now he's got on some nigger, who he says fit like a devil."

"All these persons are known to us, by *our* traditions, also!" exclaimed my uncle, with more interest than I had known him manifest for many a day. "But I'm amazed to find that the Indians retain so accurate an account of such small matters, for so long a time."

"It isn't a small matter to them. Their battles is seldom on a very great scale, and they make great account of any skrimmage in which noted warriors have fallen." Here Manytongues paused for a minute, and listened attentively to the discourse of the chiefs; after which he resumed his explanations. "They have met with a great difficulty in the house," he continued, "while everything else is right. They understand the cliff of rocks, the position of the buildings themselves, that ravine thereaway,

and all the rest of the things hereabouts, except the house."

"What may be the difficulty with the house? Does it not stand in the place it ought to occupy?"

"That's just their difficulty. It *does* stand where it ought to stand, but it isn't the right sort of house, though they say the shape agrees well enough,—one side out to the fields, like; two sides running back to the cliff, and the cliff itself for the other. But their traditions say that their warriors indivour'd to burn out your forefathers, and that they built a fire again' the side of the buildin', which they never would have done had it been built of stone, as this house is built. *That's* what partic'larly puzzles them."

"Then their traditions are surprisingly minute and accurate! The house which then stood on, or near this spot, and which did resemble the present building in the ground plan, *was* of squared logs, and might have been set on fire, and an attempt was actually made to do so, but was successfully resisted. Your chiefs have had a true account; but changes have been made here. The house of logs stood near fifty years, when it was replaced by this

dwelling, which was originally erected about sixty years ago, and has been added to since, on the old design. No, no—the traditions are surprisingly accurate."

This gave the Indians great satisfaction, as soon as the fact was communicated to them; and from that instant all their doubts and uncertainty were ended. Their own knowledge of the progress of things in a settlement, gave them the means of comprehending any other changes; though the shape of this building having so nearly corresponded with that of which their traditions spoke, they had become embarrassed by the difference in the material. While they were still continuing their examinations, and ascertaining localities to their own satisfaction, my uncle and myself continued the discourse with Manytongues.

"I am curious to know," said my uncle, "what may be the history of Susquesus, that a party of chiefs like these should travel so far out of their way, to pay him the homage of a visit. Is his great age the cause?"

"That is one reason, sartainly; though there is another that is of more account, but which is known only to themselves. I have often tried to get the history out of them, but never could

succeed. As long as I can remember, the Onondagoes, and Tuscaroras, and the Injins of the old New York tribes, that have found their way up to the prairies, have talked of the Upright Onondago, who must have been an old man when I was born. Of late years they have talked more and more of him; and so good an opportunity offering to come and see him, there would have been great disappointment out West had it been neglected. His age is, no doubt, one principal cause, but there is another, though I have never been able to discover what it is."

"This Indian has been in communication, and connected with my immediate family, now near, if not quite ninety years. He was with my grandfather, Cornelius Littlepage, in the attack on Ty, that was made by Abercrombie, in 1758; and here we are within twelve or thirteen years of a century from that event. I believe my great-grandfather, Herman Mordaunt, had even some previous knowledge of him. As long as I can remember, he has been a grey-headed old man; and we suppose both he and the negro who lives with him, to have seen fully a hundred and twenty years, if not more."

"Something of importance happened to Susquesus, or the Trackless, as he was then called, about ninety-three winters ago; that much I've gathered from what has fallen from the chiefs at different times; but, what that something was, it has exceeded my means to discover. At any rate, it has quite as much to do with this visit as the withered Hemlock's great age. Injins respect years; and they respect wisdom highly; but they respect courage and justice most of all. The tarm 'Upright' has its meaning, depend on't."

We were greatly interested by all this, as indeed were my grandmother, and her sweet companions. Mary Warren, in particular, manifested a lively interest in Susquesus's history, as was betrayed in a brief dialogue I now had with her, walking to and fro in front of the piazza, while the rest of the party were curiously watching the movements of the still excited savages.

"My father and I have often visited the two old men, and have been deeply interested in them," observed this intelligent, yet simple-minded girl,—"with the Indian, in particular, we have felt a strong sympathy, for nothing is plainer than the keenness with which he still

feels on the subject of his own people. We have been told that he is often visited by redmen,—or, at least, as often as any come near him; and they are said ever to exhibit a great reverence for his years, and respect for his character."

"This I know to be true, for I have frequently seen those who have come to pay him visits. But they have usually been merely your basket-making, half-and-half sort of savages, who have possessed the characteristics of neither race, entirely. This is the first instance in which I have heard of so marked a demonstration of respect—how is that, dear grandmother? can you recall any other instance of Susquesus's receiving such a decided mark of homage from his own people as this?"

"This is the third within my recollection, Hugh. Shortly after my marriage, which was not long after the revolution, as you may know, there was a party here on a visit to Susquesus. It remained ten days. The chiefs it contained were said to be Onondagoes altogether, or warriors of his own particular people; and something like a misunderstanding was reported to have been made up; though what it was, I confess I was too thoughtless then to inquire.

Both my father-in-law, and my uncle Chainbearer, it was always believed, knew the whole of the Trackless' story, though neither ever related it to me. I do not believe your grandfather knew it," added the venerable speaker, with a sort of tender regret, "or I think I should have heard it. But that first visit was soon after Susquesus and Jaaf took possession of their house, and it was reported, at the time, that the strangers remained so long, in the hope of inducing Sus to rejoin his tribe. If such was their wish, however, it failed; for there he is now, and there he has ever been, since he first went to the hut."

"And the second visit, grandmother—you mentioned that there were three."

"Oh! tell us of them all, Mrs. Littlepage," added Mary earnestly, blushing up to the eyes the moment after at her own eagerness. My dear grandmother smiled benevolently on both, and I thought she looked a little archly at us, as old ladies sometimes will, when the images of their own youth recur to their minds.

"You appear to have a common sympathy in these red-men, my children," she answered, Mary fairly blushing scarlet at hearing herself thus coupled with me in the term "children,"—

"and I have great pleasure in gratifying your curiosity. The second great visit that Susquesus received from Indians occurred the very year you were born, Hugh, and then we really felt afraid we might lose the old man; so earnest were his own people in their entreatics that he would go away with them. But he would not. Here he has remained ever since, and a few weeks ago he told me that here he should die. If these Indians hope to prevail any better, I am sure they will be disappointed."

"So he told my father, also," added Mary Warren, "who has often spoken to him of death, and has hoped to open his eyes to the truths of the gospel."

"With what success, Miss Warren? That is a consummation which would terminate the old man's career most worthily."

"With little, I fear," answered the charming girl, in a low, melancholy tone. "At least, I know that my father has been disappointed. Sus listens to him attentively, but he manifests no feeling beyond respect for the speaker. Attempts have been made to induce him to enter the church before, but——"

"You were about to add something, Miss Warren, which still remains to be said."

"I can add it for her," resumed my grandmother, "for certain I am that Mary Warren will never add it herself. The fact is, as you must know, Hugh, from your own observation, that Mr. Warren's predecessor was an unfaithful and selfish servant of the church—one who did little good to any, not even himself. In this country it takes a good deal, in a clergyman, to wear out the patience of a people; but it can be done; and when they once get to look at him through the same medium as that with which other men are viewed, a reaction follows, under which he is certain to suffer. We could all wish to throw a veil over the conduct of the late incumbent of St. Andrew's, but it requires one so much thicker and larger than common, that the task is not easy. Mary has merely meant that better instruction, and a closer attention to duty, might have done more for Trackless twenty years ago, than they can do to-day."

"How much injury, after all, faithless ministers can do to the church of God! One such bad example unsettles more minds than twenty good examples keep steady."

"I do not know that, Hugh; but of one thing I am certain—that more evil is done by

pretending to struggle for the honour of the church, by attempting to sustain its unworthy ministers, than could be done by at once admitting their offences, in cases that are clear. We all know that the ministers of the altar are but men, and as such are to be expected to fall —certain to do so without Divine aid—but if we cannot make its ministers pure, we ought to do all we can to keep the altar itself from contamination."

"Yes, yes, grandmother—but the day has gone by for *ex officio* religion in the American branch of the "church"—here Mary Warren joined the other girls—"at least. And it is so best. Suspicions may be base and unworthy, but a blind credulity is contemptible. If I see a chestnut forming on yonder branch, it would be an act of exceeding folly in me to suppose that the tree was a walnut, though all the nursery-men in the country were ready to swear to it."

My grandmother smiled, but she also walked away, when I joined my uncle again.

"The interpreter tells me, Hugh," said the last, "that the chiefs wish to pay their first visit to the hut this evening. Luckily, the old farm-house is empty just now, since Miller

has taken possession of the new one; and I have directed Mr. Manytongues to establish himself there, while he and his party remain here. There is a kitchen, all ready for their use, and it is only to send over a few cooking utensils, that is to say, a pot or two, and fifty bundles of straw, to set them up in housekeeping. For all this I have just given orders, not wishing to disturb you, or possibly unwilling to lay down a guardian's authority; and there is the straw already loading up in yonder barnyard. In half an hour they may rank themselves among the pot-wollopers of Ravensnest."

"Shall we go with them to the house before, or after they have paid their visit to Susquesus?"

"Before, certainly. John has volunteered to go over and let the Onondago know the honour that is intended him, and to assist him in making his toilet; for the red-man would not like to be taken in undress any more than another. While this is doing, we can instal our guests in their new abode, and see the preparations commenced for their supper. As for the '*Injins*,' there is little to apprehend from them, I fancy, so long as we have a strong party of the real Simon Pures within call."

After this we invited the interpreter to lead his chiefs, towards the dwelling they were to occupy, preceding the party ourselves, and leaving the ladies on the lawn. At that season, the days were at the longest, and it would be pleasanter to pay the visit to the hut in the cool of the evening than to go at an earlier hour. My grandmother ordered her covered wagon before we left her, intending to be present at an interview which everybody felt must be most interesting.

The empty building which was thus appropriated to the use of the Indians was quite a century old, having been erected by my ancestor, Herman Mordaunt, as the original farm-house on his own particular farm. For a long time it had been used in its original character; and when it was found convenient to erect another, in a more eligible spot, and of more convenient form, this old structure had been preserved as a relic, and from year to year its removal had been talked of, but not effected. It remained, therefore, for me to decide on its fate, unless, indeed, the "spirit of the Institutions" should happen to get hold of it, and take its control out of my hands, along with that of the rest of my property, by way of demonstrating to man-

kind how thoroughly the great State of New York is imbued with a love of rational liberty!

As we walked towards the "old farm-house," Miller came from the other building to meet us. He had learned that his friends, the pedlars, were his—what shall I call myself? "Master" would be the *legal* term, and it would be good English; but it would give the "honourable gentleman" and his friends mortal offence, and I am not now to learn that there are those among us who deny facts that are as plain as the noses on their faces, and who fly right into the face of the law whenever it is convenient. I shall not, however, call myself a "boss" to please even these eminent statesmen, and therefore must be content with using a term that, if the moving spirits of the day can prevail, will soon be sufficiently close in its signification, and call myself Tom Miller's——nothing.

It was enough to see that Miller was a good deal embarrassed with the dilemma in which he was placed. For a great many years he and his family had been in the employment of me and mine, receiving ample pay, as all such men ever do—when they are so unfortunate as to serve a malignant aristocrat—much higher pay than they would get in the service of your

Newcomes, and Holmeses, and Tubbses, besides far better treatment in all essentials; and now he had only to carry out the principles of the anti-renters to claim the farm he and they had so long worked, as of right. Yes, the same principles would just as soon give this hireling my home and farm as it would give any tenant on my estate that which he worked. It is true, one party received wages, while the other paid rent; but these facts do not affect the principle at all; since he who received the wages got no other benefit from his toil, while he who paid the rent was master of all the crops—I beg pardon, the *boss* of all the crops. The common title of both—if any title at all exist—is the circumstance that each had expended his labour on a particular farm, and consequently had a right to own it for all future time.

Miller made some awkward apologies for not recognising me, and endeavoured to explain away one or two little things that he must have felt put him in rather an awkward position, but to which neither my uncle nor myself attached any moment. We knew that poor Tom was human, and that the easiest of all transgressions for a man to fall into were those connected with his self-love; and that the temptation to a man

who has the consciousness of not being anywhere near the summit of the social ladder, is a strong inducement to err when he thinks there is a chance of getting up a round or two; failing of success in which, it requires higher feelings, and perhaps a higher station, than that of Tom Miller's, not to leave him open to a certain demoniacal gratification, which so many experience at the prospect of beholding others dragged down to their own level. We heard Tom's excuses kindly, but did not commit ourselves by promises or declarations of any sort.

CHAPTER X.

"Two hundred years! two hundred years!
How much of human power and pride,
What glorious hopes, what gloomy fears,
Have sunk beneath their noiseless tide!"

PIERPONT.

It wanted about an hour to sunset,—or sun-*down*, to use our common Americanism—when we all left the new quarters of our red brethren, in order to visit the huts. As the moment approached, it was easy to trace in the Indians the evidence of strong interest; mingled, as we fancied, with a little awe. Several of the chiefs had improved the intervening time, to retouch the wild conceits that they had previously painted on their visages, rendering their countenances still more appalling. Flintyheart, in particular, was conspicuous in his grim embellishments; though Prairiefire had not laid any veil between the eye and his natural hue.

As the course of my narrative will now

render it necessary to relate conversations that occurred in languages and dialects of which I know literally nothing, it may be well to say here, once for all, that I got as close a translation of everything that passed, as it was possible to obtain, from Manytongues: and wrote it all down, either on the spot, or immediately after returning to the Nest. This explanation may be necessary in order to prevent some of those who may read this manuscript, from fancying that I am inventing.

The carriage of my grandmother had left the door, filled with its smiling freight, several minutes before we took up our line of march. This last, however, was not done without a little ceremony, and some attention to order. As Indians rarely march except in what is called "Indian file," or singly; each man following in the footsteps of his leader, such was the mode of advancing adopted on the present occasion. The Prairiefire led the line, as the oldest chief, and the one most distinguished in council. Flintyheart was second, while the others were arranged by some rule of precedency that was known to themselves. As soon as the line had formed, it commenced its march; my uncle, the interpreter, and myself, walking at

the side of Prairiefire, while Miller, followed by half-a-dozen of the curious from the Nest House and the farm, followed in the rear.

It will be remembered that John had been sent to the hut to announce the intended visit. His stay had been much longer than was anticipated; but when the procession had gone about half the distance it was to march, it was met by this faithful domestic, on his return. The worthy fellow wheeled into line, on my flank, and communicated what he had to say, while keeping up with the column.

"To own the truth, Mr. Hugh," he said, "the old man was more moved by hearing that about fifty Indians had come a long distance to see him—"

"Seventeen—you should have said seventeen, John, that being the exact number."

"Is it, sir? Well, I declare that I thought there might be fifty—I once thought of calling 'em forty, sir, but it then occurred to me that it might not be enough." All this time John was looking over his shoulder to count the grave-looking warriors who followed in a line; and, satisfied of his mistake, one of the commonest in the world for men of his class, that of exaggeration, he resumed his report. "Well, sir,

I *do* believe you are right, and I have been a little hout. But old Sus was quite moved, sir, when I told him of the intended visit, and so I stayed to help the old gentleman to dress and paint; for that nigger, Yop, is of no more use now, you know, sir, than if he had never lived in a gentleman's family at all. It must have been hawful times, sir, when the gentry of York had nothing but niggers to serve 'em, sir."

"We did pretty well, John, notwithstanding," answered my uncle, who had a strong attachment to the old black race, that once so generally filled all the menial stations of the country, as is apt to be the case with all gentlemen of fifty; "we did pretty well, notwithstanding. Jaaf, however, never acted strictly as a body-servant, though he was my grandfather's own man."

"Well, sir, if there had been nobody but Yop at the hut, Sus would never have been decently dressed and painted for this occasion. As it is, I hope that you will be satisfied, sir, for the old gentleman looks remarkably well;—Indian fashion, you know, sir."

"Did the Onondago ask any questions?"

"Why, you know how it is with him in that particular, Mr. Hugh. He's a very silent per-

son, is Susquesus; most remarkable so when he 'as any one has can entertain him with conversation. *I* talked most of the time myself, sir, has I commonly does when I pays him a wisit. Indians is remarkably silent, in general, I believe, sir."

"And whose idea was it to paint and dress —yours, or the Onondago's?"

"Why, sir, I supposes the hidear to be Indian, by origin, though in this case it was my surgestion. Yes, sir, I surgested the thought; though I will not take it on myself to say Sus had not some hinclination that way, even before I 'inted my hopinion."

"Did you think of the paint?" put in uncle Ro. "I do not remember to have seen the Trackless in his paint these thirty years. I once asked him to paint and dress on a Fourth of July; it was about the time you were born, Hugh—and I remember the old fellow's answer as well as if it were given yesterday. 'When the tree ceases to bear fruit,' was the substance of his reply, 'blossoms only remind the observer of its uselessness.'"

"I have heard that Susquesus was once considered very eloquent, even for an Indian."

"I remember him to have had some such

reputation, though I will not answer for its justice. Occasionally, I have heard strong expressions in his brief, clipping manner of speaking English,—but, in common, he has been content to be simple and taciturn. I remember to have heard my father say, that when he first made the acquaintance of Susquesus, and that must have been quite sixty years since, the old man had great apprehension of being reduced to the mortifying necessity of making baskets and brooms; but his dread on that subject once removed, he had ever after seemed satisfied and without care."

"Without care is the condition of those who have least, I believe, sir. It would not be an easy matter for the government of New York to devise ways and means to deprive Sus of *his* farms, either by instituting suits for title, destroying quarter-sales, laying taxes, or resorting to any other of the ingenious expedients known to the Albany politics."

My uncle did not answer for quite a minute; when he did, it was thoughtfully and with great deliberation of manner.

"Your term of 'Albany Politics' has recalled to my mind," he said, "a consideration that has often forced itself upon my reflections.

There is doubtless an advantage—nay, there may be a necessity for cutting up the local affairs of this country, by entrusting their management to so many local governments; but there is, out of all question, one great evil consequent on it. When legislators have the great affairs of state on their hands, the making of war and peace, the maintaining of armies, and the control of all those interests which connect one country with another, the mind gets to be enlarged, and with it the character and disposition of the man. But, bring men together, who *must* act, or appear incapable of acting, and set them at work upon the smaller concerns of legislation, and it's ten to one but they betray the narrowness of their education by the narrowness of their views. This is the reason of the vast difference that every intelligent man knows to exist between Albany and Washington."

"Do you then think our legislators so much inferior to those of Europe?"

"Only, as they are provincial; which nine in ten necessarily are, since nine Americans in ten, even among the educated classes, are decidedly provincial. This term 'provincial' covers quite one-half of the distinc-

tive sins of the country, though many laugh at a deficiency, of which, in the nature of things, they can have no notion, as purely a matter of the imagination. The active communications of the Americans certainly render them surprisingly little obnoxious to such a charge, for their age and geographical position. These last disadvantages produce effects, nevertheless, that are perhaps unavoidable. When you have had an opportunity of seeing something of the society of the towns, for instance, after your intercourse with the world of Europe, you will understand what I mean, for it is a difference much more readily *felt* than *described*. Provincialism, however, may be defined as a general tendency to the narrow views which mark a contracted association, and an ignorance of the great world—not in the sense of station solely, but in the sense of liberality, intelligence, and a knowledge of all the varied interests of life. But, here we are, at the hut."

There we were, sure enough. The evening was delightful. Susquesus had seated himself on a stool, on the green sward that extended for some distance around the door of his habitation, and where he was a little in shade, protected from the strong rays of a setting, but June, sun.

A tree cast its shadow over his person. Jaaf was posted on one side, as no doubt he himself thought best became his colour and character. It is another trait of human nature, that while the negro affects a great contempt and aversion for the red-man, the Indian feels his own mental superiority to the domestic slave. I had never seen Susquesus in so grand costume, as that in which he appeared this evening. Habitually he wore his Indian vestments; the leggings, moccasin, breech-piece, blanket or calico shirt, according to the season; but I had never before seen him in his ornaments and paint. The first consisted of two medals, which bore the images, the one of George III., the other of his grandfather—of two more, bestowed by the agents of the republic; of large rings in his ears, that dropped nearly to his shoulders, and of bracelets formed of the teeth of some animal, that, at first, I was afraid was a man. A tomahawk that was kept as bright as friction could make it, and a sheathed knife, were in his girdle, while his well-tried rifle stood leaning against a tree; weapons that were now exhibited as emblems of the past, since their owner could scarcely render either very effective. The old man had used the paint with unusual judgment for an Indian,

merely tinging his cheeks with a colour that served to give brightness to eyes that had once been keen as intense expression could render them, but which were now somewhat dimmed by age. In other respects, nothing was changed in the customary neat simplicity that reigned in and around the cabin, though Jaaf had brought out, as if to sun, an old livery coat of his own, that he had formerly worn, and a cocked hat, in which I have been told he was wont actually to exhibit himself of Sundays and holidays; reminders of the superiority of a "nigger" over an "Injin."

Three or four rude benches, which belonged to the establishment of the hut, were placed at a short distance in front of Susquesus, in a sort of semicircle, for the reception of his guests. Towards these benches, then, Prairiefire led the way, followed by all the chiefs. Although they soon ranged themselves in the circle, not one took his seat for fully a minute. That time they all stood gazing intently, but reverently, towards the aged man before them, who returned their look as steadily and intently as it was given. Then, at a signal from their leader, who on this occasion was Prairiefire, every man seated himself. This change of position, how-

ever, did not cause the silence to be broken; but there they all sat, for quite ten minutes, gazing at the Upright Onondago, who in his turn kept his look steadily fastened on his visitors. It was during this interval of silence that the carriage of my grandmother drove up, and stopped just without the circle of grave, attentive Indians, not one of whom even turned his head to ascertain who or what caused the interruption. No one spoke; my dear grandmother being a profoundly attentive observer of the scene, while all the bright faces around her were so many eloquent pictures of curiosity, blended with some gentler and better feelings, exhibited in the most pleasing form of which humanity is susceptible.

At length Susquesus himself arose, which he did with great dignity of manner, and without any visible bodily effort, and spoke. His voice was a little tremulous, I thought, though more through feeling than age; but, on the whole, he was calm, and surprisingly connected and clear considering his great age. Of course, I was indebted to Manytongues for the interpretation of all that passed.

"Brethren," commenced Susquesus, "you are welcome. You have travelled on a long,

and crooked, and thorny path, to find an old chief, whose tribe ought ninety summers ago to have looked upon him as among the departed. I am sorry no better sight will meet your eyes at the end of so long a journey. I would make the path back toward the setting sun broader and straighter if I knew how. But I do not know how. I am old. The pine in the woods is scarce older; the villages of the pale-faces, through so many of which you have journeyed, are not half so old; I was born when the white race were like the moose on the hills; here and there one; now they are like the pigeons after they have hatched their young. When I was a boy, my young legs could never run out of the woods into a clearing; now, my old legs cannot carry me into the woods, they are so far off. Everything is changed in the land, but the red-man's heart. *That* is like the rock which never alters. My children, you are welcome."

That speech, pronounced in the deep husky tones of extreme old age, yet relieved by the fire of a spirit that was smothered rather than extinct, produced a profound impression. A low murmur of admiration passed among the guests, though neither rose to answer, until a sufficient time had seemed to pass, in which the

wisdom that they had just been listeners to might make its proper impression. When this pause was thought to be sufficiently long to have produced its effect, Prairiefire, a chief more celebrated in council even than in the field, arose to answer. His speech, freely translated, was in the following words.

"Father;—your words are always wise—they are always true. The path between your wigwam and our villages *is* a long one—it is a crooked path, and many thorns and stones have been found on it. But all difficulties may be overcome. Two moons ago, we were at one end of it; now we are at the other end. We have come with two notches on our sticks. One notch told us to go to the Great Council House of the Pale-face, to see our great pale-face Father—the other notch told us to come here, to see our great Red Father. We have been to the great Council House of the Pale-faces; we have seen Uncle Sam. His arm is very long; it reaches from the salt lake, the water of which we tried to drink, but it is too salt, to our own lakes, near the setting sun, of which the water is sweet. We never tasted water that was salt before, and we do not find it pleasant. We shall never

taste it again; it is not worth while to come so far to drink water that is salt.

"Uncle Sam is a wise chief. He has many counsellors. The council at his council-fire must be a great council—it has much to say. Its words ought to have some good in them, they are so many. We thought of our Red Father, while listening to them, and wanted to come here. We *have* come here. We are glad to find our Red Father still alive and well. The Great Spirit loves a just Indian, and takes care of him. A hundred winters, in his eyes, are like a single winter. We are thankful to him for having led us by the crooked and long path, at the end of which we have found the Trackless —the Upright of the Onondagoes. I have spoken."

A gleam of happiness shot into the swarthy lineaments of Susquesus, as he heard, in his own language, a well-merited appellation that had not greeted his ears for a period as long as the ordinary life of man. It was a title, a cognomen that told the story of his connexion with his tribe; and neither years, nor distance, nor new scenes, nor new ties, nor wars, nor strifes, had caused him to forget the smallest incident connected with that tale. I gazed at the old

man with awe, as his countenance became illuminated by the flood of recollections that was rushing into it, through the channel of his memory, and the expressive glance my uncle threw at me, said how much he was impressed, also. One of the faculties of Manytongues was to be able to interpret, *pari passu* with the speaker; and, standing between us and the carriage, he kept up, sentence by sentence, a low accompaniment of each speech, so that none of us lost a syllable of what was said.

As soon as Prairiefire resumed his seat, another silence succeeded. It lasted several minutes, during which the only audible sounds were various discontented grunts, accompanied by suppressed mutterings on the part of old Jaaf, who never could tolerate any Indian but his companion. That the negro was dissatisfied with this extraordinary visit was sufficiently apparent to us, but not one of all the red men took heed of his deportment. Sus, who was nearest to him, must have heard his low grumbling, but it did not induce him to change his look from the countenances of those in his front for a single moment. On the other hand, the visitors themselves seemed totally unconscious of the negro's presence, though in fact they were not, as sub-

sequently appeared. In a word, the Upright Onondago was the centre of attraction for them, all other things being apparently forgotten for the time.

At length there was a slight movement among the redskins, and another arose. This man was positively the least well-looking of the whole party. His stature was lower than that of the rest of the Indians; his form was meagre and ungraceful—the last, at least, while his mind was in a state of rest; and his appearance, generally, was wanting in that nobleness of exterior which so singularly marked that of every one of his companions. As I afterwards learned, the name of this Indian was Eagles-flight, being so called from the soaring character of the eloquence in which he had been known to indulge. On the present occasion, though his manner was serious and his countenance interested, the spirit within was not heaving with any of its extraordinary throes. Still, such a man could not rise to speak, and avoid creating some slight sensation among his expectant auditors. Guarded as are the red-men in general on the subject of betraying their emotions, we could detect something like a suppressed movement among his friends when

Eaglesflight stood erect. The orator commenced in a low but solemn manner, his tones changing from the deep, impressive guttural, to the gentle and pathetic, in a way to constitute eloquence of itself. As I listened, I fancied that never before did the human voice seem to possess so much winning power. The utterance was slow and impressive, as is usually the case with true orators.

"The Great Spirit makes men differently," commenced Eaglesflight. "Some are like willows, that bend with the breeze and are broken in the storm. Some are pines, with slender trunks, few branches, and a soft wood. Now and then there is an oak among them, which grows on the prairie, stretching its branches a great way, and making a pleasant shade. This wood is hard; it lasts a long time. Why has the Great Spirit made this difference in trees? —why does the Great Spirit make this difference in men? There is a reason for it. *He* knows it, though we may not. What he does is always right.

"I have heard orators at our council fires complain that things should be as they are. They say that the land, and the lakes, and the rivers, and the hunting-grounds, belong to the red-

man only, and that no other colour ought ever to be seen there. The Great Spirit has thought otherwise, and what he thinks happens. Men are of many colours. Some are red, which is the colour of my father. Some are pale, which is the colour of my friends. Some are black, which is the colour of my father's friend. He is black, though old age is changing his skin. All this is right; it comes from the Great Spirit, and we must not complain.

"My father says he is very old—that the pine in the woods is scarce older. We know it. That is one reason why we have come so far to see him, though there is another reason. My father knows what that other reason is; so do we. For a hundred winters and summers, that reason has not gone out of our minds. The old men have told it to the young men; and the young men, when they have grown older, have told it to their sons. In this way it has reached our ears. How many bad Indians have lived in that time, have died, and are forgotten! It is the good Indian that lives longest in our memories. We wish to forget that the wicked ever were in our tribes. We never forget the good.

"I have seen many changes. I am but a

child, compared with my father; but I feel the cold of sixty winters in my bones. During all that time the red-men have been travelling towards the setting sun. I sometimes think I shall live to reach it! It must be a great way off, but the man who never stops goes far. Let us go there, pale-faces will follow. Why all this is, I do not know. My father is wiser than his son, and he may be able to tell us. I sit down to hear his answer."

Although Eaglesflight had spoken so quietly, and concluded in a manner so different from what I had expected, there was a deep interest in what was now going on. The particular reason why these red-men had come so far out of their way to visit Susquesus had not yet been revealed, as we all hoped would be the case; but the profound reverence that these strangers, from the wilds of the far west, manifested for our aged friend, gave every assurance that when we did learn it, there would be no reason for disappointment. As usual, a pause succeeded the brief address of the last speaker; after which, Susquesus once more arose, and spoke.

"My children," he said, "I am very old. Fifty autumns ago, when the leaves fell, I thought it

was time for me to pass on to the Happy Hunting-Grounds of my people, and be a redskin again. But my name was not called. I have been left alone here, in the midst of the pale-face fields, and houses, and villages, without a single being of my own colour and race to speak to. My head was almost grown white. Still, as years came on my head, the spirit turned more towards my youth. I began to forget the battles, and hunts, and journeys of middle life, and to think of the things seen when a young chief among the Onondagoes. My day is now a dream, in which I dream of the past. Why is the eye of Susquesus so far-seeing, after a hundred winters and more? Can any one tell? I think not. We do not understand the Great Spirit, and we do not understand his doings. Here I am, where I have been for half my days. That big wigwam is the wigwam of my best friends. Though their faces are pale, and mine is red, our hearts have the same colour. I never forget *them*—no, not one of them. I see them all, from the oldest to the youngest. They seem to be of my blood. This comes from friendship, and many kindnesses. These are all the pale-faces I now see. Red-men stand before my

eyes in all other places. My mind is with them.

"My children, you are young. Seventy winters are a great many for one of you. It is not so with me. Why I have been left standing alone here, near the hunting-grounds of our fathers, is more than I can say. So it is, and it is right. A withered hemlock is sometimes seen, standing by itself, in the fields of the pale-faces. I am such a tree. It is not cut down, because the wood is of no use, and even the squaws do not like it to cook by. When the winds blow, they seem to blow around it. It is tired of standing there alone, but it cannot fall. That tree wishes for the axe, but no man puts the axe to its root. Its time has not come. So it is with me—my time has not come.

"Children, my days now are dreams of my tribe. I see the wigwam of my father. It was the best in the village. He was a chief, and venison was never scarce in his lodge. I see him come off the war-path with many scalps on his pole. He had plenty of wampum, and wore many medals. The scalps on his pole were sometimes from red-men, sometimes from pale-faces. He took them all himself. I see

my mother, too. She loved me as the she-bear loves her cubs. I had brothers and sisters, and I see them, too. They laugh and play, and seem happy. There is the spring where we dipped up water in our gourds, and here is the hill where we lay waiting for the warriors to come in from the war-paths and the hunt. Everything looks pleasant to me. That was a village of the Onondagoes, my own people, and I loved them a hundred and twenty winters ago. I love them now, as if the time were but one winter and one summer. The mind does not feel time. For fifty seasons I thought but little of my own people. My thoughts were on the hunt and the war-path, and on the quarrels of the pale-faces, with whom I lived. Now, I say again, I think most of the past, and of my young days. It is a great mystery why we can see things that are so far off so plainly, and cannot see things that are so near by. Still, it is so.

"Children, you ask why the red men keep moving towards the setting sun, and why the pale-faces follow. You ask if the place where the sun sets will be ever reached, and if pale-men will go there to plough and to build, and to cut down the trees. He that has seen what

has happened, ought to know what *will* happen again. I am very old, but I see nothing new. One day is like another. The same fruits come each summer, and the winters are alike. The bird builds in the same tree many times.

"My children, I have lived long among the pale-faces. Still, my heart is of the same colour as my face. I have never forgotten that I am a red-man; never forgotten the Onondagoes. When I was young, beautiful woods covered these fields. Far and near the buck and the moose leaped among the trees. Nothing but the hunter stopped them. It is all changed! The plough has frightened away the deer. The moose will not stay near the sound of the church-bell. He does not know what it means. The deer goes first. The red-man keeps on his trail, and the pale-face is never far behind. So it has been since the big canoes of the stranger first came into our waters; so it will be until another salt lake is reached beneath the setting sun. When that other lake is seen, the red-man must stop, and die in the open fields, where rum, and tobacco, and bread are plenty, or march on into the great salt lake of the west and be drowned. *Why* this is so I cannot tell. That it has been

so, I know; that it *will* be so, I believe. There is a reason for it; none can tell what that reason is but the Great Spirit."

Susquesus had spoken calmly and clearly, and Manytongues translated as he proceeded, sentence by sentence. So profound was the attention of the savage listeners that I heard their suppressed breathings. We white men are so occupied with ourselves, and our own passing concerns, look on all other races of human beings as so much our inferiors, that it is seldom we have time or inclination to reflect on the consequences of our own acts. Like the wheel that rolls along the highway, however, many is the inferior creature that we heedlessly crush in our path. Thus has it been with the red-man, and, as the Trackless had said, thus will it continue to be. He will be driven to the salt lake of the far west, where he must plunge in and be drowned, or turn and die in the midst of abundance.

My uncle Ro knew more of the Indians, and of their habits, than any one else of our party, unless it might be my grandmother. She, indeed, had seen a good deal of them in early life; and when quite a young girl, dwelling with that uncle of her own who went by the

sobriquet of the "Chainbearer," she had even dwelt in the woods, near the tribe of Susquesus, and had often heard him named there as an Indian in high repute, although he was even at that distant day an exile from his people. When our old friend resumed his seat, she beckoned her son and myself to the side of the carriage, and spoke to us on the subject of what had just been uttered, the translation of Many-tongues having been loud enough to let the whole party hear what he said.

"This is not a visit of business, but one of ceremony only," she said. "To-morrow, probably, the real object of the strangers will be made known. All that has passed, as yet, has been complimentary, mixed with a little desire to hear the wisdom of the sage. The red-man is never in a hurry, impatience being a failing that he is apt to impute to us women. Well, though we are females, we can wait. In the mean time, some of us can weep, as you see is particularly the case with Miss Mary Warren."

This was true enough; the fine eyes of all four of the girls glistening with tears, while the cheeks of the person named were quite wet with those that had streamed down them. At this allusion to such an excess of sympathy, the

young lady dried her eyes, and the colour heightened so much in her face, that I thought it best to avert my looks. While this by-play was going on, Prairiefire arose again, and concluded the proceedings of that preliminary visit by making another short speech:

"Father," he said, "we thank you. What we have heard will not be forgotten. All redmen are afraid of that Great Salt Lake, under the setting sun, and in which some say it dips every night. What you have told us, will make us think more of it. We have come a great distance, and are tired. We will now go to our wigwam, and eat, and sleep. To-morrow, when the sun is up here," pointing to a part of the heavens that would indicate something like nine o'clock, "we will come again, and open our ears. The Great Spirit who has spared you so long, will spare you until then, and we shall not forget to come. It is too pleasant to us to be near you, for us to forget. Farewell."

The Indians now rose in a body, and stood regarding Susquesus fully a minute, in profound silence, when they filed off at a quick pace, and followed their leader towards their quarters for the night. As the train noiselessly wound its way from before him, a shade passed athwart

the dark countenance of the Trackless, and he smiled no more that day.

All this time the negro, the contemporary of the Indian, kept muttering his discontent at seeing so many redskins in his presence, unheeded and indeed unheard by his friend.

"What you do wid dem Injin?" he growled, as the party disappeared. "No good ebber come of sich as dem. How many time dey work debbletry in a wood, and you and I not werry far off, Sus. How ole you got, redskin; and forgetful! Nobody can hold out wid colour' man. Gosh! I do b'lieve I lib for ebber, sometime! It won'erful to think of, how long I stay on this werry 'arth!"

Such exclamations were not uncommon with the aged Jaaf, and no one noted them. He did not seem to expect any answer himself, nor did any one appear to deem it at all necessary to make one. As for the Trackless, he arose with a saddened countenance, and moved into his hut like one who wished to be left alone with his thoughts. My grandmother ordered the carriage to move on, and the rest of us returned to the house on foot.

END OF VOL. II.

LONDON:
R. CLAY, PRINTER, BREAD STREET HILL.

00076462

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 26 March, 2016